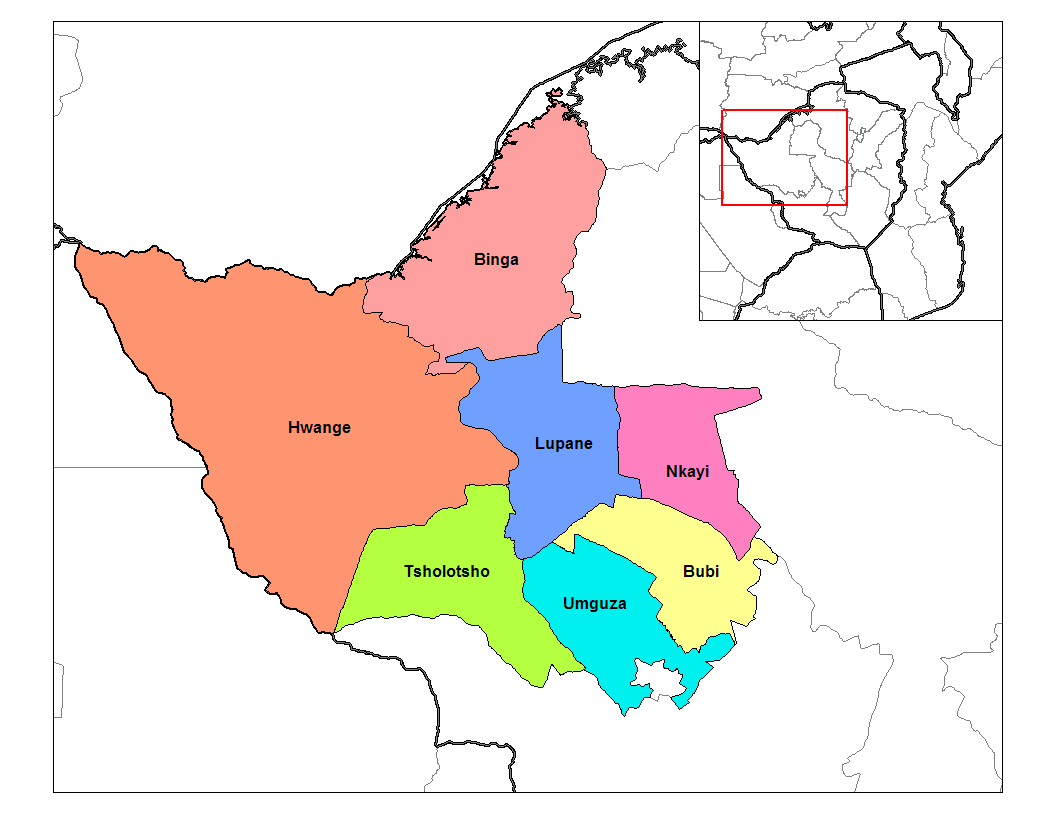
# Activity Design

## Context Analysis

### Geographic Areas

##### FIGURE 1-1: MATABELELAND NORTH DISTRICTS

Matabeleland North is an arid, sparsely populated province in western Zimbabwe. Its population relies on natural resource-based livelihoods that are vulnerable due to the fragile environment and increasing climate variability. Political marginalization, economic stagnation, environmental degradation, and lack of investment in infrastructure cause some of the country’s highest poverty, food insecurity, and malnutrition rates. Most people live in communal farming areas and rely on rain-fed agriculture. These areas experience soil erosion, water shortages, crop failure, livestock diseases, and poor sanitation stemming from poor resource management and weak governance at the community, local, and national levels. Although the population is struggling, they demonstrate impressive capacity to adapt and develop creative solutions that serve as a strong foundation on which to build and layer additional adaptive and absorptive capacities. The province has seven districts with a population of approximately 843,393[[1]](#endnote-2) majority Ndebele speakers and speakers of minority language groups – Tonga (Binga), Nambya (Hwange), Kalanga, and Tshwao (Tsholotsho).[[2]](#endnote-3)

***Climate, landscape, and environment.*** Matabeleland North lies in Natural Regions IV and V,[[3]](#endnote-4) the driest of Zimbabwe’s land classifications. Total rainfall is only 350 to 600 mm per year. The rainfall pattern is increasingly erratic, with periodic dry spells, droughts, flooding, and violent storms. Important tourist destinations include Victoria Falls and Hwange National Park; the province borders Zimbabwe’s second largest city, Bulawayo. Almost half the province is dedicated to national parks, safari areas, forest reserves, commercial farming, and mining concessions. The topography declines gradually east to west, draining into the Zambezi basin and Kariba dam via the Gwayi river catchment and Shangani sub-catchment. In Tsholotsho, only the far northern wards are part of the Gwayi sub-catchment. Soils are mainly infertile Kalahari sands that are highly permeable and vulnerable to poor grazing management and crop tillage. Although rich in natural resources, deforestation, agricultural conversion, cultivation of stream banks and wetlands, and the decline of formal and traditional management systems cause extensive land degradation. Widespread soil erosion in some areas creates gullies and silts rivers and dams. Appreciation in the value of natural capital[[4]](#endnote-5) is low and rarely factors into local development initiatives. Benefits of commercial resource exploitation (forests, wildlife and tourism, mining, hydro and thermal electricity) do not reach most residents.

Hydrology and water sources.Of the three main rivers in the province,only the Zambezi flows perennially across the province. The Gwayi and Shangani have a perennial source of water naturally contained under sediment in the riverbed, requiring mechanisms to extract water from the sediment (a process known as “sand abstraction”). Development of water resources, though possible, is often challenging and expensive. National and local government, NGOs, and the private sector have built a limited number of small and mid-sized dams and irrigation schemes, but many are not functional due to lack of clear ownership, poor management, lack of maintenance, and upstream land degradation. Water abstraction from the Zambezi is limited due to protected wildlife areas and difficult terrain. Irrigation has limited potential in Lupane and Nkayi due to poor soils and the large floodplain; in other parts, the deeply incised Shangani river channel limits pumping of surface water. Groundwater access is generally deep and often low yielding for geological reasons. In sandstone areas (parts of Lupane, Nkayi, and Binga), the soil is unstable, requiring boreholes to be cased to their full depth. New methods for accessing water, such as sand dams, have potential but have not been widely explored.

Wildlife. National parks and safari areas create jobs and bring revenue to the government and private tourism outfits, but few benefits reach the general population. Wildlife threatens crops (birds, elephants, baboons) and livestock (lions, hyenas, jackals), especially in areas adjacent to national parks. Poaching and pests and diseases (anthrax and foot and mouth disease) spread from wildlife are also problems. Human-wildlife conflicts are increasing as the resource base declines, and during drought. The 1989 Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) initiative, allowed Rural District Councils to offer safari operators the right to exploit wildlife for 5–15 percent of the profits. In Binga, benefits from CAMPFIRE and a Reduced Emissions from Degradation and Deforestation (REDD+) initiative have failed to meet expectations for improving livelihoods.[[5]](#endnote-6)

### Profiles of Targeted Participants

Poverty and wealth ranking.Characterizing and ranking depth of poverty in dollars is challenging in Zimbabwe given currency and price fluctuations and an informal barter economy for many goods and services. Recent data suggest percentages of poor and extremely poor in Matabeleland North are very high, both in absolute terms and relative to the rest of the country. The 2019 Amalima Final Evaluation Report found that 98 percent of the population earned less than $1.90 per day in the program areas of Matabeleland North and South. Triangulating these data with the 2019 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey found 49.9 percent[[6]](#endnote-7) of people in Matabeleland North in the lowest wealth quintile. When looking at the extremely poor, GOZ 2017 data found 33 percent of the province’s population beneath the Total Food Consumption Poverty Line, which is the lower of the two poverty lines the GOZ tracks and is based on the cost of a minimum food basket. The number of people who fall under this line has risen with exponential increases in food costs since 2017.[[7]](#endnote-8) Proxy measures for vulnerability and poverty add clarity; the World Food Program (WFP)[[8]](#endnote-9) identifies ***chronically vulnerable*** households in Matabeleland North as those that plant less than one hectare of land and have few assets and no reliable remittances. They often provide labor to wealthier groups, own very few livestock, and lack draft power. They cannot send all their children to school and depend on external assistance. The ***extremely poor*** (households headed by those who are labor-constrained or have a large number of dependents, such as the elderly, chronically ill, disabled, or children) have no assets, and are unable to provide labor to generate income. They cannot send their children to school and rely on external assistance to survive. Better-off households (2–5% of the population) have access to 2.6 or more hectares, at least ten cattle, and 20 goats. They may own small businesses (such as shops or grinding mills), be formally employed, and/or receive reliable remittances; can hire labor; and can assist poor households in times of need.

Women of reproductive age***.*** Women traditionally submit to the authority of their husbands or fathers and usually do not own or inherit valuable assets, including land. Rural women’s participation in community decision-making, rural institutions, and development planning is extremely low. Men select crops to grow and market and own valuable livestock (cattle and goats); women tend to own more poultry. Vegetable gardening is considered a female activity assisted by children. Women provide most field crop production labor. Rural women provide food and collect wood and water for the family in addition to doing domestic chores and caregiving. Although 86 percent of women depend on land for livelihoods[[9]](#endnote-10) and family food, and most smallholder farmers are women, land ownership is heavily skewed toward men. The 2015 Demographic Health Survey found 29 percent of women aged 25–49 were married by age 18, and more than one in five aged 15–19 was already a mother or pregnant for the first time. Due to this power imbalance, gender-based violence is a national concern.[[10]](#endnote-11) The prevalence of female-headed households has increased in Matabeleland North[[11]](#endnote-12) due to male migration. Often, migrants cannot send stable remittances, so women left behind must earn an income as well.

Women of reproductive age do not get an adequate diet, with serious potential impacts for them and their young children.[[12]](#endnote-13) Combined with a heavy workload, poor diet affects maternal nutrition, leading to maternal anemia, low birth weight, and maternal and child health issues. The 2019 Rural Livelihoods Assessment (RLA) found that the diets of only 38 percent of women aged 15–49 in Matabeleland North met minimum diversity requirements. The province also had some of the lowest figures for women consuming foods rich in protein, iron, and vitamin A. Reduced productivity and increasing crop failures due to environmental degradation and climate impacts exacerbate health impacts.

Infants and young children. In traditional Zimbabwean culture, children are subordinate to adults and are involved in family labor, with boys herding livestock herding and plowing while girls assist with “female” roles. Traditionally, men are served the best quality food in the largest portions, which has a negative impact on maternal and child nutrition.[[13]](#endnote-14) When women must work, other caregivers feed infants and young children, which contributes to poor feeding and childcare practices and other health issues. In Binga, it is reported[[14]](#endnote-15) that mothers regularly leave their young children for the day while they buy and sell fish. The 2019 RLA found figures for Minimum Acceptable Diet for children ages 6–23 months were lowest in Matabeleland North (2% compared to 6.9% nationally), while stunting (24.6% in 2018 to 26.1% in 2019) and Global Acute Malnutrition (0.2% in 2018 to 1.6% in 2019) were increasing, although national stunting declined (from 32% in 2010 to 26.8% in 2019).[[15]](#endnote-16)

Adolescents and young adults.The 2012Matabeleland North census reflects a young population, with 44 percent under age 15. These young people[[16]](#endnote-17) face multiple challenges including poor-quality and unaffordable education, few employment or livelihood opportunities leading to risk-taking or forced migration, limited civic engagement, lack of access to health care, and disproportionate exposure to drugs and sexually transmitted diseases. The province has the lowest literacy among women and the lowest proportion of people with at least some secondary schooling[[17]](#endnote-18) due to a dearth of secondary schools and high dropout rates. Studies suggest boys leave school for livelihood reasons while girls leave due to marriage or pregnancy.[[18]](#endnote-19) Young women in Zimbabwe are at high risk of sexual abuse and early marriage.[[19]](#endnote-20) In rural communities, young people are rarely involved in community decision-making. Most (especially young men[[20]](#endnote-21)) are not interested in farming or participating in community activities, preferring quick income opportunities. They don’t trust traditional or community leaders, feel marginalized, and believe their leaders don’t trust or value them. Despite these challenges and tensions, a recent study showed that young people in Matabeleland North have a stronger sense of feeling part of (79%) and supported by (76.9%) their community[[21]](#endnote-22) than in any other province in Zimbabwe.

Other vulnerable groups. The Tonga and Nambya, as minority groups, report feeling excluded from dialogue and disempowered to speak about community issues[[22]](#endnote-23) and cite further marginalization through a poor road, education, and communication infrastructure in the district. San communities that have traditionally survived as hunter-gatherers find it hard to integrate into mainstream livelihood activities and are considered marginalized.[[23]](#endnote-24) The 2019 RLA found that 18 percent of households surveyed in the province had a member who was an orphan, five percent had someone living with a disability, and two percent were caring for a chronically ill person. Although formal government safety nets focus on these sub-populations, in reality the coverage is often unreliable and insufficient.

### Food Security Context and Drivers of Food Insecurity and Malnutrition

#### Food Security Context

Much of Zimbabwe is experiencing a major food security crisis, with 4.1 million rural people estimated in Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 (crisis)[[24]](#endnote-25) arising from depleted household food stocks due to successive droughts, price volatility, and stagnant income levels. Below average crop production due to the 2018/19 drought led to a 2019/20 national cereal deficit.[[25]](#endnote-26) The 2019/20 rainy season started late and has been erratic, with long midseason dry spells and below average rainfall. Matabeleland North has seen violent storms and flooding (in Hwange, Lupane, and Binga) that have destroyed crops and infrastructure and caused deaths.FEWS NET predicts that a second consecutive below-average season will result in less area planted, lower than normal livelihood opportunities, decreased household incomes, and a low 2020 harvest, driving high assistance needs. Most markets monitored across the country have low volumes of maize grain and meal; where these are available, prices are significantly above average.

The 2019 RLA found Matabeleland North to have the highest number (68%) of households projected to be cereal-insecure, affecting 491,166 people at peak, and the lowest average cereal stocks per household (20.1kg vs. 37.5kg nationally). Matabeleland North and South were the only provinces relying on purchases rather than own production. Binga has the highest percentage of cereal-insecure households in the country at 85.1 percent and projected to enter an emergency phase (IPC 4) food security situation.[[26]](#endnote-27) Hwange consistently experiences high food insecurity,[[27]](#endnote-28) as do Tsholotsho, Nkayi, and Lupane.[[28]](#endnote-29)

Chronic malnutrition has declined nationally, but other indicators show families fail to consume sufficient quantities of diverse, nutritious food. Nutritional data for pregnant and lactating women and children under five are of particular concern in the province. The National Nutrition Survey shows that stunting rates in the province declined from 32 to 24.6 percent from 2010 to 2018 but rose to 26.8 in 2019 according to ZimVac. Breastfeeding and health-seeking behaviors are among few bright spots where Matabeleland North’s rates are above the national average – exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months at 74 percent versus the national average of 61 percent in 2018.[[29]](#endnote-30)

#### Drivers of Food Insecurity and Malnutrition

Limited access to and availability of sufficient quantities and quality of food. Matabeleland North does not produce enough food for its population. Irrigation opportunities are underexploited, and dryland yields are low due to infertile soils, land degradation, unsuitable crop choice, poor genetic quality of retained seed, and arid climate. Poverty, low population density, long distances, and poor roads limit the market from providing more than the most basic foodstuffs at the local level. Animals are managed as stores of value and social assets rather than sources for feeding households (with dairy, eggs, meat, and income). There is little appreciation for the nutritional value of indigenous/traditional crops and wild-harvested products.[[30]](#endnote-31) Farmers focus on maize, which does not thrive in the dry climate, at the expense of nutritious, drought-tolerant crops like small grains and legumes.

Other problems that constrain food production include low availability of improved seeds (especially legumes, small grains, and vegetables), little tradition of vegetable production, pests and diseases, and lack of irrigation and draft power. Agricultural extension services are inadequate, and agricultural labor is limited by migration and chronic illness. Poor post-harvest practices, including for food storage, preservation, and processing, mean nutritious foods are not always available Most households have unreliable, insufficient income to spend on food due to lack of livelihood opportunities, low agricultural productivity, and limited market access. Climate hazards (including droughts, floods, and extreme heat) lead to lower productivity and subsequent price volatility and related economic shocks, exacerbating food shortages. Women’s low social standing and lack of agency underpins these challenges.

Livestock (cattle, goats, sheep, donkeys, chickens) is an important source of income and assets but is severely limited by lack of sufficient, good quality grazing or fodder, issues of disease and parasite control, and unmanaged breeding practices. Farmers rely heavily on grazing land. Pastures do not meet animals’ year-round nutritional needs at current stocking levels and are thus overgrazed, leading to erosion and soil degradation. This further reduces available quality pasture. Few producers practice supplementary feeding during drought years, leading to animal death. Livestock are seen as a status symbol; hence there is extreme reluctance to sell or slaughter livestock for food.

Many young, economically active people find work in urban areas or cross-border trade or migrate to other countries. Migrants leave behind families expecting remittances, but Amalima focus groups have found that many migrants neither return nor send remittances, leaving wives to run family farms but not delegating to them the authority to make major decisions – such as selling cattle to mitigate shocks. Economic hardships drive young people to non-agriculture activities such as brick molding, sand mining, illegal gold mining, and firewood sales that degrade natural resources. Each district has a unique set of livelihood strategies based on the natural resource base that the population utilizes to generate income and access food. These are summarized in Figure 1-2.

##### FIGURE 1-2: LIVELIHOODS CONTEXT

| Livelihood Strategies Utilized in Each District |
| --- |
| **Binga** is in the northwest of the province bordering Lake Kariba. Its majority Tonga population was displaced during the construction of Kariba dam in the 1950s. They are now settled far inland due to tourism areas along the lake shore. Tonga farmers who previously practiced flood-plain agriculture have struggled to master dryland cropping. The most common livelihoods are crop and livestock production, with indigenous food collection during the lean season. Income is from goat sales, fishing, firewood, sales of crafts, local wage work, and formal employment at Hwange colliery. In some wards, men live in fishing camps for most of the year while women and children live inland on family farms. Human-wildlife conflict is a challenge here. |
| **Hwange,** in the far west of the province, contains the large national park, several smaller conservancies, and the busy tourist resorts of Victoria Falls; all provide tourism-related jobs. Hwange town serves the colliery and large thermal power station. These towns and tourist resorts are potential markets for produce. Abundant wildlife threatens the crops and livestock of communities bordering the national park, conservancies, and forest, especially in the dry season and periods of drought. Livelihoods are mainly livestock rearing; game ranching; fishing; subsistence farming; tourism; and sale of arts and crafts, firewood, and indigenous fruit. The Nambya minority group is present. |
| **Lupane** is in the geographic center of the province. Main livelihood activities are crop, vegetable, and livestock production; casual labor; wood carving; beer brewing; gold panning; fishing; and sale of thatching grass and indigenous fruits. Abundant wildlife in the northwestern part of the district (including elephant, lion, wild pigs, and baboons) threatens crops, livestock, and human lives. Marketing of agricultural products is hampered by the poor road network in the district. |
| **Nkayi** lies in the east of the province. Rainfed cropping of maize and sorghum, livestock, and migratory labor are the main livelihoods, with some income from forest products and gold in Kwekwe and Gweru districts. The semi-arid climate makes crop production precarious. Remittances contribute significantly to household economies. Horticulture, where irrigation water is available, and sale of arts and crafts, are notable. Wards in the west are more concerned with cattle and cereal production and sales of forest resources. |
| **Tsholotsho** lies in the province’s southeast. Crop and livestock husbandry are practiced. There is no tradition of vegetable cultivation; efforts to encourage the practice have met mixed success. In the past, people relied more on indigenous vegetable harvesting, consuming the leaves of field crops (such as pumpkins, cow peas, and sweet potatoes) or leaving volunteer vegetables to grow in fields during the rainy season and drying them for consumption throughout the year. A main source of livelihood for the district is remittances from those who have migrated to Botswana or South Africa. Other important livelihood activities include crafts, grass cutting, and firewood sales. Human-wildlife conflict is a problem, and the San minority group is present. |
| **Bubi,** in the southeast of the province, has only five communal faming wards and six wards of smallholder resettlement land. The rest of the district comprises small and larger-scale commercial farms, and there is considerable mining in the area. |
| **Umguza** surrounds the city of Bulawayo. The district is peri-urban, with five major factories and Bulawayo international airport. Umguza contains most of the commercial farms in Matabeleland North, a resettlement area, and has a large forest area. |

Barriers to food consumption and utilization of consumed nutrients.Stakeholder consultation in Matabeleland North conducted with the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MOHCC) in November and December 2019 found general lack of knowledge of and adherence to good infant and young child feeding (IYCF) and hygienic care practices; consumption patterns and practices for adolescents and pregnant and lactating women (PLW); and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) practices. Households lack other health-seeking behaviors (e.g., immunization, family planning, and malaria prevention), especially among caregivers of children under five.[[31]](#endnote-32) Inadequate care reflectslimits on women’s time and labor. Due to household economic realities, women often leave infants and young children, sometimes for weeks or months. This can lead to early weaning, poor complementary feeding, inadequate sanitation and hygiene, and risky behaviors that can compromise health. Religious and cultural practices and taboos around feeding children are factors in some communities. Mothers in Zimbabwe are not fully empowered to make choices about eating and feeding, and men and mothers-in-law have strong influence. There is a widespread lack of infrastructure that supplies safe drinking water and facilitates handwashing and proper disposal of fecal matter. The 2018 National Nutrition Survey found that the province has the largest number of households practicing open defecation.

Coping mechanisms and resilience ***capacities.*** Across all districts, hazards and shocks are part of daily life, and people have evolved strategies to adapt or absorb their impact. After decades of shocks without sufficient time or resources to recover, resilience at the household level and social cohesion and support systems have dramatically eroded. Because of their lower social status, women and young people are more vulnerable to shocks than men, and more likely to employ negative coping strategies such as reducing the number of meals or food consumed and selling assets –exacerbating the cycle of vulnerability and depleting their capacities further. The 2019 RLA found an increased number of shocks experienced by households across all provinces for two years in a row. Cash shortages were the most prevalent (81.5%), followed by changes in cereal prices (78.8%) and drought (75.9%). Common coping mechanisms include formal social support from government and NGOs, relying on relatives and others, and informal safety nets. Yet these too have been overwhelmed by the repeated shocks, and the RLA noted that the province had the lowest proportion of households believing they can get support from the community or other people in the country. Traditional leadership or civil society has provided or mobilized localized safety nets and support for the most vulnerable (e.g., collecting funds for funeral expenses or setting aside grain for those who cannot produce for themselves). Although successive shocks and limited grain and incomes have undermined such traditional systems, there is a great opportunity to reinvigorate them. Not only safety nets have been impacted, however. Leadership of civil society and governance institutions at all levels (village, ward, district) are limited in their ability to plan for and respond to shocks for their communities and constituents as well. Repeated shocks and lack of knowledge and resources have hindered their ability to fulfill these critical roles in society.

### Socio-Economic, Political, and Climatic Context

Socio-economic context.Zimbabwe’s ongoing economic crisis is characterized by high inflation, cash liquidity problems, and shortages of basic goods and services (including food, fuel, electricity, water, and health care). Year-on-year inflation was 521 percent in December 2019, and food prices were estimated to have risen 719 percent in the last 12 months.[[32]](#endnote-33) Formal employment opportunities are scarce. For example only seven percent of Zimbabweans aged 18–35 are formally employed.[[33]](#endnote-34) Foreign currency reserves and personal savings are depleted This leaves significant portions of the rural population reliant on food aid, with well over half of all households food-insecure after a poor agricultural season like 2019.[[34]](#endnote-35) Millions of Zimbabweans have left the country, and remittances are a critical source of income. Extreme poverty is estimated to have risen from 29 to 34 percent from 2018 to 2019.[[35]](#endnote-36) driven by economic contraction, shortages of foreign currency, fuel, and electricity, and sharp rises in costs of food and basic commodities. The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum notes, “poor government policies, adverse weather, lack of timely availability of inputs and severe economic constraints to underutilization of land” have caused a series of food crises.[[36]](#endnote-37)

Political context.Zimbabwean politics is characterized by deep divisions and factionalism in the ruling party and conflicts with and within the main opposition party. Since independence, Matabeleland has been politically and economically marginalized. The predominantly Ndebele communities in the province complain of political persecution and exclusion from major government development projects, leading to services and infrastructure falling behind other parts of the country.[[37]](#endnote-38) Despite the economic decline and deep political divisions, the country has remained mostly peaceful, punctuated by occasional protests over election results (2018) or economic policies. CNFA implemented Amalima in Matabeleland from 2013–2020 without significant political or security impediments.

Each district in Zimbabwe is headed by a Rural District Council that, with a District Development Coordinator (DDC), coordinates government departments in the district. Each district also has at least one Chief,[[38]](#endnote-39) who is selected through a lineage system and is then appointed by the President and linked to central government through the DDC. Chiefs oversee Headmen, who oversee Village Heads. Collectively they are referred to as “traditional leaders” whose roles theoretically include upholding traditional values and culture and protecting natural resources from abuse and degradation. At the ward level, there is a Ward Development Committee (WDC) with an elected ward councilor, traditional leaders, and village representatives. Each village has an elected Village Development Committee (VDC), but in practice the WDCs and VDCs are nonfunctional. Traditional leaders’ roles include upholding traditional values and culture and protecting natural resources from abuse and degradation

Climatic context***.*** Zimbabwe has a naturally highly variable climate influenced by the El Niño-Southern Oscillation. Climate change already impacts Zimbabwean communities, with average annual rainfall reduction of around five percent and average annual temperature increases of about 0.4°C[[39]](#endnote-40) compounding increasingly frequent droughts, heat waves, violent storms, and floods. The Gwayi catchment is projected to be one of the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in the coming decades.[[40]](#endnote-41) Agricultural activities will be heavily impacted in terms of reduced area suitable for crops and livestock, increased pest and disease problems, and declines in water available for irrigation.

Status of infrastructure***.*** Matabeleland North lacks adequate health facilities, and patients must walk long distances to receive care. There is a lack of health professionals, and health facilities are poorly equipped.[[41]](#endnote-42) Recent economic and political problems have led to a decline in national health services in terms of human resources, medical products, infrastructure, financing, health information, service delivery, leadership, and governance – prerequisites for a functional health delivery system.[[42]](#endnote-43)

All districts in Matabeleland North lack adequate water infrastructure. Many water points and irrigation schemes are defunct due to broken equipment and poor management. Lack of trained pump minders and spare parts for boreholes are common issues.[[43]](#endnote-44) Matabeleland North has the lowest percentage of the population accessing an improved water source within less than 30 minutes of travel time (51%).[[44]](#endnote-45) Underlying geology in the west of Lupane makes many boreholes saline or caustic, causing toxicity and corroding pumps.

The province’s large size, remote communities, and poor transport network in terms of road coverage and condition and public transport availability severely hamper development, particularly access to health facilities, schools, and markets. Electricity is sparse and unreliable throughout rural Zimbabwe, and only about one-third of households in Matabeleland North have electricity supply.[[45]](#endnote-46) Cell phone networks are only reliably accessible close to towns. Cash availability is extremely poor (a national phenomenon). Mobile payment options are not well used in this province outside of towns.[[46]](#endnote-47)

Status of markets. Local markets for purchasing inputs and selling produce (crops and livestock) in the province are weak, hindered by poor roads, long distances, lack of affordable transport, and absence of market price information. The Grain Marketing Board is the major buyer of grain, with branches in all districts; it also sells cereals to individuals and millers. Other forms of grain trade are direct sales to large millers or breweries, farmer-to-farmer sales, sales to community grinding mills, and barter, especially during droughts (often for livestock feed). Horticulture crops grown under irrigation schemes are sold at farm gates to the local community or traders from Bulawayo. Cattle buyers offer low prices for livestock, citing transport challenges; they often pay by weight only instead of the stipulated weight and condition. Hwange and Tsholotsho are in the foot and mouth disease red zone, which depresses prices as live animals cannot be moved to commercial feedlots in other districts for fattening. The main markets for livestock are cattle sale points, private traders, butcheries and abattoirs, and other farmers.

Purchases of inputs and goods is limited by a lack of stock at retail outlets at the ward level, so most households travel to the nearest business center or town to buy food and other goods. Most basic goods and services are available but hard for rural families to afford. Wholesalers supply small shops at small rural business centers with basic commodities. Due to extreme cash shortages, barter trade is very common. When private traders come to buy crops or livestock, they often bring food and other essentials to trade with, in addition to or instead of cash.

### Capacity and Reach of Government Institutions and Donor-Funded Interventions

#### Other Development Actors

Numerous development agencies have worked in Matabeleland North to address major resilience, livelihood, nutrition, and agricultural challenges. These programs have a relatively small footprint, and many are ending within the next two years.

* The Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fundhas funded three programs in the province on which Food for Peace investments can be layered. For example, the MELANA project, ending in 2021, installed a solar-powered dip tank and a 30,000-liter borehole in Nkayi that will facilitate improved behaviors around livestock management and improved WASH practices. We will also incorporate learning from their comprehensive outcome survey being conducted by the fund’s Resilience Hub.
* ***Catholic Relief Services’*** USAID-funded Pathways Program ends in 2022 but has notably engaged over 15,000 youth to promote healthy behaviors, sensitized men and boys to gender equity concerns, and started many Village Savings and Lending (VS&L) groups in Lupane. These trained groups represent critical networks and resources which the new Activity can leverage.
* ***World Vision International Zimbabwe*** implements four individually sponsored long-term Area Development Programs (ADPs) for clusters of three to four wards in Hwange, Lupane, and Nkayi covering health, livelihoods, education, gender, nutrition, and WASH. The high level of programmatic overlap offers an opportunity to coordinate and prevent duplication around specific interventions and to actively include participants in Community Visioning.
* ***Save the Children Zimbabwe*** runs nutrition, financial inclusion, and cash transfer programs in Binga and was a critical part of emergency flood response early this year. These interventions and learning from them will inform future disaster risk reduction (DRR) planning and mitigation work.
* ***PLAN International Zimbabwe’s*** work in Tsholotsho with children and youth will provide another platform to reinforce messages on healthy behavior and care practices promoted by Food for Peace, but also support youth who are able to engage in improved economic activities.
* ***The World Food Program*** is another important development actor in the province, providing critical emergency food assistance – it is critical for coordination and has a suite of tools, research, and assessments that can be leveraged to support learning especially around vulnerability and risk.
* ***IMC***, an Amalima partner,strengthens healthcare services and nutrition programming to reduce chronic and acute malnutrition and address poor availability and quality of WASH services.

***World Bicycle Relief*** manufactures and distributes a rugged, affordable, long-lasting, specially designed, and locally assembled bicycle to health service providers, farmers, entrepreneurs, and students while also building a sustainable mobility ecosystem to support end-users.

Local NGOs that operate in the area doing complementary interventions that can either be leveraged or enhanced by Food for Peace include:

* ORAP, an Amalima partner, focuses primarily in Matabeleland North and South and facilitates sustainable, community-led rural development, incorporating traditional practices and knowledge.
* ***Africa Centre for Holistic Management*** in Hwange runs farmer training and promotes a system that utilizes livestock to restore degraded watersheds, wildlife habitat, and croplands.
* ***Grassroots Soccer Zimbabwe*** educates, inspires, and supports adolescents on improved health and good habits through physical activity and healthy competition through soccer.
* ***Softfoot Alliance***, helps communities in Hwange develop localized solutions to wildlife conflict.

***Ntengwe*** in Binga, Hwange, and Lupane is women-led, working in livelihoods, youth, and health.

#### Host Government Institutions

Policy and institutional framework. Generally, Zimbabwe has supportive and detailed policies, and many officials are knowledgeable and dedicated. Implementation is severely hampered by a lack of resources, especially fuel and funds for travel to rural areas. Zimbabwe’s Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP)[[47]](#endnote-48) aims to “*promote and ensure adequate food and nutrition security for all people at all times particularly amongst the most vulnerable.*” The FNSP outlines and calls for multi-stakeholder Food and Nutrition Security Committees (FNSC) as a platform for multi-sector coordination at the provincial, district, and ward levels to improve food and nutrition security. However, district FNSCs are inactive due to lack of resources, and ward-level FNSCs are not yet formed. The National Nutrition Strategy (NNS)[[48]](#endnote-49) has a mandate to “*implement evidence-based nutrition interventions that are integrated within a broad multi-sectoral collaboration framework*.” Coordination and implementation of the NNS is the responsibility of the National Nutrition Department in the MOHCC. Other key institutions related to food and nutrition security are the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, and Rural Resettlement, with departments responsible for research and extension (AGRITEX), Livestock and Veterinary Services, and Climate Change Management. Natural resource management (NRM) is administered through several acts, notably the Environmental Management Act (implemented by district Environmental Management Agency – EMA), Forestry Policy (implemented by district Forestry Commission), Drought Mitigation Policy, Agriculture Policy (implemented by district and ward AGRITEX), and Climate Policy and Strategy.

Watershed and water resource institutions. The National Water Act and National Water Authority Act provide legal and administrative frameworks for management of catchments and water abstraction. Transboundary institutions such as the Zambezi Watercourse Commission govern major watersheds. The Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) works through decentralized stakeholder-managed Catchment Councils (CCs) and Sub-Catchment Councils (SCCs). Most rivers in Matabeleland North fall under the Gwayi SCC, comprising representatives of local authorities, relevant government departments, the private sector, NGOs, communal and commercial farmers, and other large waterpoint users. CCs prepare catchment management plans in consultation with stakeholders, grant water use permits, regulate and supervise water use, supervise SCCs, and resolve water use conflicts. The SCCs promote catchment protection, assist in data collection, and participate in catchment planning. These bodies meet regularly but lack capacity and resources to reach community or micro-catchment levels, although they want to do so. The SCCs should elect water councilors representing all water users (including smallholders), but this is rarely the case as farmers are unaware of the SCC administration process. The District Water and Sanitation Subcommittee coordinates and plans WASH activities. The District Development Fund (DDF), a quasi-government department under the office of the President, maintains rural infrastructure, including providing training for borehole pump minders and mechanics.

Disaster risk and reduction institutions. The Civil Protection Act, administered by the Department of Civil Protection, has a mandate to establish DRR Committees at the national and ward levels, with representatives from villages in each ward. Each DRR Committee is meant to identify the most pressing risks faced by its group of villages and prepare an annual plan for review by the District Department of Civil Protection (comprising AGRITEX, the Ministry of Health, Meteorological Services Department, Forestry Commission, and EMA). Due to lack of resources, these committees are not very active; they welcome support from NGOs to help them develop and implement DRR plans.

Social services and safety net institutions. Government-run safety nets have been constrained after multiple widespread shocks. Led by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare, the Harmonized Social Cash Transfer Program provides cash transfers to food-poor and labor-constrained households with high dependency ratios. Although the program has seen successes, such as reducing amounts borrowed from neighbors, it has not had a measurable effect on children’s health status.[[49]](#endnote-50)

#### Public and Private Extension Services and Health Systems

Agricultural ***extension officers.*** In theory there should be one AGRITEX officer per ward, serving local communities. However, extension services have suffered. Generally, AGRITEX provide good services and are knowledgeable, but challenges include poor motivation due to low salaries and lack of equipment and transport. Although coverage is impressive, there are not enough AGRITEX officers, so the distances they must travel are prohibitive. The standard ratio is one extension worker to 350–500 households. But in Hwange, for example, one extension worker covers double that number.[[50]](#endnote-51) Some officers do not speak the local languages, and extension services suffer from brain drain as experienced officers leave for the private sector, NGOs, or work abroad. There are more vacant posts than filled positions (338 out of 646) in Matabeleland North, and AGRITEX officers voice a need for more in-service training, especially regarding soil improvement for sandy soils, livestock management, seed saving, and bulking.[[51]](#endnote-52) There is no real systematic or organized private or civil society-based extension service that is available for smallholder farmers who are growing food for local markets.

***Health extension workers.*** Each primary health facility serves up to four wards and is managed by a health center committee that consists of community members tasked with overseeing and management of community health activities. There is at least one doctor per district referral center. There is at least one qualified nurse and Environmental Health Technician in each primary health facility whose respective roles are to provide primary health care services and to lead WASH promotion. Villages are attended by a Village Health Worker (VHW) whose role is to provide health service outreach and serve as a link between the community and the formal health system. Ward Nutrition Coordinators are at the support nutrition extension work and support VHWs. However, economic and political problems have caused a serious decline in human resources, medical products, infrastructure, financing, health information, service delivery, leadership, and governance[[52]](#endnote-53) that support these services.

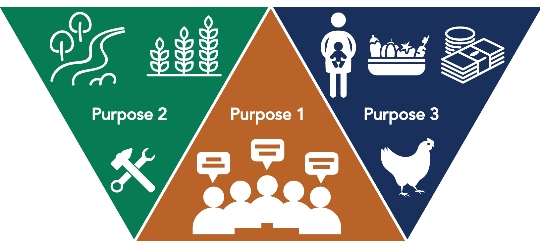
### Security Factors Influencing Activity Implementation and Success

Major safety-related risks relate to vehicle operations in the implementation area. Roads are generally in average condition, constructed of gravel or broken asphalt with narrow lanes and shoulders that drop off, and livestock and wildlife roam or are herded along these roads. People also use major road networks as walking and biking paths. Political instability, corruption, a weak economy, and civil unrest are security concerns that could affect the Activity. High rates of opportunistic crime include pickpocketing, shoplifting, armed and unarmed robbery, and road banditry in some areas where gangs steal cargo from trucks. Theft of commodities from a warehouse, vehicle, or other distribution point is a risk that requires the development of effective physical protection measures that mitigate against loss.

## Conceptual Framework

### Theory of Change Narrative and Logical Framework

The Amalima Loko Theory of Change (ToC) identifies and prioritizes the most critical pathways to achieving the project goal to ***improve food security through increased food access and sustainable watershed management*.** To achieve this, the ToC has been structured with three technical Purposes. Purpose 1, *Enhanced and inclusive local ownership over food security and resilience planning and development* provides a foundation that connects the others in a comprehensive, locally led, people-centric process to realize a community’s vision for Purpose 2: *Improved health and availabiliy of soil, water, and plant resources within the watershed* and their individual and collective capacities to withstand the most common shocks and stressors, as addressed in Purpose 3: *Improved human health and livelihoods*. Purpose 1 also supports the development of transformative capacities like improved governance, planning, coordination, and inclusion of marginalized groups, to underpin and reinforce activities under the other purposes for greater environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Figure 1-3 depicts the mutually reinforcing and integrated relationships among the three Technical Purposes.



##### FIGURE 1-3: TECHNICAL PURPOSES RELATIONS

CNFA has identified the key drivers of food insecurity in Matabeleland North and high level outcomes within each Technical Purpose that will lead communities to overcome them and achieve food and nutrition security. For each outcome, we have identified, analyzed, and prioritized the key limitations and the leverage points to address them, represented by Sub-Purposes and Intermediate Outcomes in the ToC. Based on these priorities, The Activtiy will address these key limitations to acheiving each high level outcome by sequencing and layering interventions to address the most limiting factors sequentially. ‘Inadequate coping strategies and resilience capacities’ and ‘Communal and indiviudal apathy and hopelessness’ are foundational limiting factors that underpin lack of access to foods and poor watershed management in Matabeleland North. The Activity addresses these factors through each Technical Purpose. The ‘lower social status of women and youth’ is an interrelated foundational limiting factor that increases vulnerability to shocks, limits coping strategies, and deminishes social cohesion. ‘Limited access to and availability of sufficient quantities and quality of food’ is also a key limiting factor for improving food security, reflected in the prioritization of food production, access and utilization across program purposes.

Layered onto the foundational, crosscutting limiting factors, which are noted with icons throughout the ToC graphic, Amalima Loko is structured around the three Technical Purposes, each of which addresses the most limiting factors of the program’s overall goal.

**Purpose 1:** *Enhanced and inclusive local ownership over food security and resilience planning and development* addresses issues of governance and social cohesion. Community Visioning, a locally led, people-centric process to realize a community’s vision, is prioritized as an approach in Purpose 1 and is the sequential starting point for Amalima Loko program implementation. Community Visioning interventions address two of the most limiting factors: ‘Communal and individual apathy and hopelessness’ and ‘Lower social status of women and youth’. By addressing these limiting factors first, Amalima Loko builds a solid foundation which will be leveraged to address next most limiting factors within Purpose 1: ‘Lack of community owernship of and participation in planning and action at the community level’, and ‘insufficient government coordination and service mechanisms to respond to community needs’.

Under Sub-purpose 1.1, we have prioritized interventions that promote improved planning and action at the community level, addressing the most limiting factors of insufficient community organizing capacity, negative social dynamics for women and youth, and inadequate systems to support the most vulnerable. Interventions under sub-purpose 1.2 address limiting factors related to insufficient government capacity for inclusive service delivery as well as government and community accountability. The sub-purposes reflect the prioritization of most limiting factors to improved governance and social cohesion which are also foundational to Purposes 2 and 3 as depicted in Figure 1-3.

**Purpose 2:** *Improved health and availabiliy of soil, water, and plant resources within the watershed* addresses the limiting factor of the natural resource base not adequately supporting human lives and livelihoods. Extensive land degradation, with widespread soil erosion in some areas, creates gullies and silts rivers and dams, exacerbating water shortages for household and agriculture use in this arid region, which is increasingly prone to drought. Purpose 2 seeks to improve the health of the natural resource base within the watershed through improved watershed management practices – including watershed governance and sustainable use of natural resources by communities and individuals as reflected in the sub-purposes.

Sub-purpose 2.1 addresses the insufficent mechanisms for community-based planning, coordination, and accountability for watershed governance. The most limiting factors are addressed sequentially through the Activity’s initial focus on watershed mapping and Integrated Water Resource Management sensitization as part of the Community Visioning process. Watershed mapping, together with Community Visioning, begins to address the two most limiting factors identified for Purpose 2: apathy towards natural resource conservation and the interrelated issue of lack of prioritzation for watershed management by individuals, communities, and government. Stakholders must first understand and value natural resources within the watershed before other key limiting factors, including planning, accountability, land use practices, and infrastructure challenges can be addressed. We have also prioritized the inclusion of youth in the watershed mapping intervention, so that youth are engaged early in the Community Visioning process, providing a foundation for continued youth participation.

Sub-purpose 2.2 addresses unsustainable land and water use practices that result in natural resource degradation, further reducing livelihood opportunities and increasing communities’ vulnerability to drought. We have identifed these unsustainable land and water use practices as a main limiting factor to improving the health and availability of soil, water and plant resources within the watershed (Puprose 2), and to address this, have prioritized interventions to catalyze sustainble changes in water and land use practices for agriculture, sanitation, and other human activities. As noted above, the Community Visioning process interventions from Purpose 1 will be sequenced first to actively engage community members in the planning process, to engender community ownership over the planning process, ensure local knowledge is used to identify appropriate improved agriculture, grazing, sanitation and other practices; and increase the likelihood that people will adopt improved practices and communities will enforce rules around land and water use. Following the planning process, interventions are implemented wholistically, stressing the relationships within the watershed, of water infrastructure, land improvement and erosion control through conservation works, and sustainable land use through improved agricutlure and grazing practices.

**Purpose 3:** *Improved human health and livelihoods* builds households’ adaptive and absorptive resilence capacities by addressing the key limiting factors of poor health (sub-purpose 3.2) and lack of adequacy of household assets and income (sub-purpose 3.1). ‘Limited access to and availability of sufficient quantities and quality of food’ is a foundational limiting factor to achieving Purpose 3, as health is dependent upon adequate nutrition, especially in the first 1,000 days after conception, and asset accumulation and productive activities require that the most basic need of sufficient food is first met.

We have prioritized interventions to increase access and availability of food, especially for PLWs and CU2, including the Blanket Supplimentary Feeding Program, which will begin early in program implementation and provide a foundation to address the next most limiting factors to improving health and livelihooods.

A factor that limits both adequacy of household assets and income and improvements to health and nutrition is access to water for productive and household use, which is required for livelihoods as well as for producing food, to support adequate nutrition, and for WASH practices. These interventions are under Purpose 2, and in sequencing interventions, the Activity will prioritize improvements to water supply and sanitation, including borehole rehabilitation and drilling and improved water conservation practices, to increase household access to water. Improved access to water will have a catalytic effect on improving household assets and income, and health and nutrition, and set the foundation for addressing the next most limiting factors to improved human health and livelihoods.

To address insufficent household income and assets under sub-purpose 3.1, we have prioritized interventions for finacial literacy and access to VS&L, which helps households build foundational skills and investment capital to launch income generating activities, engage more effectively in crop and livestock marketing, and build their asset base.

Under sub-purpose 3.2, we have prioritized interventions that improve nutrition-related knowledge and behaviors, especially for women, children, and youth; and WASH and health seeking behaviors, which were identified in the TOC process as the most limiting health factors. The Activity will prioritize health factors that are not adequately addressed by other actors in Matabeleland North or other Activity interventions. For example, although HIV is prevalent in the region and a key limiting factor to health and livelihoods, the Activity does not prioritize interventions related to HIV because other government and donor funded programs are addressing this challenge.

The Activity will prioritize the limiting factors of gender inequity and the marginalization of youth under Purpose 3, as they are particularly significant foundational limiting factors to improved human health and livelihoods. Gender inequities in the household limit women’s time and labor, which limits the adequacy of care practices related to feeding and hygiene within the household. The lower social status of women and youth limits income earning opportunities and makes them more vulnerable to malnutrition and loss of assets when faced with shocks and stresses. Thus the Activity prioritizes the Male Champions Campaign and VS&L interventions, which have been proven to improve inclusion dynamics within households and communities, building the foundation for women and youth to participate in and gain from the next sequence of activities including Care Groups, Community Health Clubs, and dietary diversity interventions.

Each of the three Amalima Loko Purposes prioritizes interventions in key leverage points to address drivers of food insecurity, layering together in mutually reinforcing and integrated relationships among the three Technical Purposes to maximize impact. The critical pathways of the ToC are explained in Section 1.4; Annex 6 presents the full ToC graphic and narrative. The name of the Activity, *Amalima Loko*, reflects its goal and intention. *Amalima* is the Ndebele word for a group of people coming together to achieve a common goal, and *Loko* is a Tonga word that means “genuine” or “authentic.” The new name suggests a continuation and leverages the positive branding achieved under the original Amalima program.3

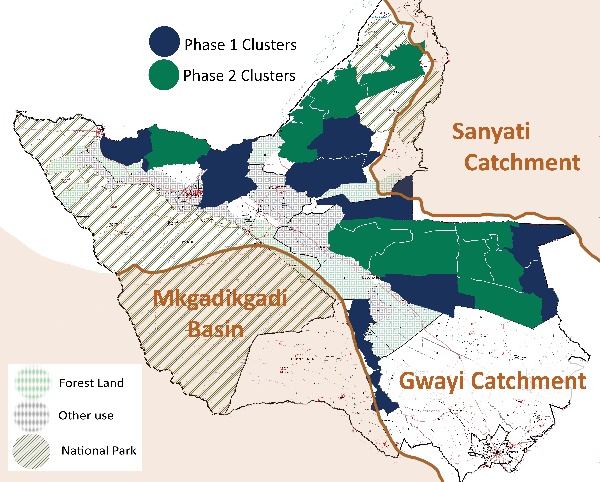
##### FIGURE 1-4: GOALS TO IMPROVE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY THROUGH INCREASED FOOD ACCESS AND SUSTAINABLE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Goal: To Improve Food Security Through Increased Food Access and Sustainable Watershed Management** | | | |
| **Purpose 1:** Enhanced and inclusive local ownership over food security and resilience planning and development | **Purpose 2:** Improved health and availability of soil, water, and plant resources within the watershed | **Purpose 3:** Improved human health and livelihoods |
| **SP 1.1. Improved planning and action at the village level**  IO 1.1.1. Improved strategies and structures for inclusive community engagement  IO 1.1.2. Effective and functional village-based groups for community action  IO 1.1.3. Adequate and reliable village-based safety nets | **SP 2.1. Improved community ownership of watershed resource governance**  IO 2.1.1. Improved mechanisms for stakeholder communication and coordination  IO 2.1.2. Improved watershed management plans and policies | **SP 3.1. Improved sufficiency and reliability of household assets and income**  IO 3.1.1. Improved financial management capacity and tools  IO 3.1.2. Increased diversified income streams  IO 3.1.3. Increased income from agricultural and livestock marketing |
| **SP 1.2. Improved planning and action at the ward level**  IO 1.2.1. Improved government capacity for service delivery  IO 1.2.2. Increased social accountability and demand for government and non-governmental services  IO 1.2.3. Improved community hazard preparedness and response | **SP 2.2 Improved use of watershed resources for lives and livelihoods**  IO 2.2.1. Improved watershed infrastructure  IO 2.2.2. Improved natural resource conservation and use practices | **SP 3.2. Improved nutrition and health for women of reproductive age and children under five**  IO 3.2.1. Improved nutritional adequacy  IO 3.2.2. Increased knowledge of optimal care, nutrition, and WASH practices  IO 3.2.3. Improved dietary diversity |

## Methodology and Strategy for Targeting Participants

The CNFA team has designed an innovative and sustainable Activity to achieve population-level impact for improved resilience and food security for 67,848 households (318,885 individuals),[[53]](#endnote-54) building on proven approaches from Amalima. The Activity’s targeting strategy to addresses critical communal land and water management challenges of Matabeleland North, reaches the poorest and most vulnerable households, including women and youth, with an integrated package of interventions tailored to their needs and capacities, ultimately strengthening food security and resilience. We use a blended approach of targeting clusters of three to five wards, creating manageable sub-divisions of the Gwayi watershed catchment. These watershed clusters recognize ward-level administrative boundaries and leadership structures while accommodating the need for watershed management to be implemented over wider areas requiring coordination and cooperation among wards.

### Ward and Cluster Selection and Prioritization

To reach the most vulnerable populations and ensure coordinated and sustainable interventions, CNFA has prioritized areas meeting two criteria: 1) wards zoned as communal lands (not urban wards, national parks, forest conservation areas, private safari concessions, commercial farming, mining areas, or contested lands) and that are 2) within the Gwayi Catchment for watershed management purposes. See Annex 12 for detailed provincial and district catchment area maps. Based on extensive desk and field research in preparing for this submission, CNFA targeted 87 of 125 wards in Binga, Hwange, Lupane, Nkayi, and Tsholotsho. Drawing from and expanding on Amalima’s successful ward cluster strategy, selected wards have been organized for watershed management and operational purposes into 21 watershed clusters of three to five wards. CNFA found through Amalima that this is an appropriate and manageable unit for operations and will facilitate landscape-level impacts on the watershed. We did not select Umguza or Bubi districts because they are mostly peri-urban, commercial farming, or mining areas with few communal wards.

##### FIGURE 1-5: PROPOSED TARGET AREAS

The Activity will roll out in two phases – the first phase, upstream, with ten watershed clusters (two in each district, 41 wards total) will start community mobilization (Purpose 1) early in the second quarter of FY2021. The second, downstream, comprising 11 clusters of 46 wards will start community mobilization in the first quarter of FY2022. The upstream/downstream phasing is consistent with best practices in watershed management, since improving water recharge and flow upstream impacts the flow downstream. The phasing is also operationally strategic, enabling the team to conduct meaningful community-level engagement in a manageable area while conducting Refinement period research to inform both upstream and downstream implementation. The broad-base interventions to be conducted during the Refinement period are interventions that have a well-established evidence base– such as supplementary feeding and VS&L groups. Refinement period activities and other assessments and mapping will be done across the whole area.

The composition of Phase 2 clusters can be adjusted during initial monitoring and evaluation (M&E) planning to select control areas for impact assessments, if Food for Peace desires. (See Annex 12 for control area map) Our targeting will reach 58 percent of the 588,866 population of the five districts – similar to the population-level coverage achieved by Amalima. Figure 1-5 shows the selected clusters, and Annex 12 includes more detailed maps describing the clusters and phases. Although clusters in Tsholotsho will not receive the same interventions as they have benefited from seven years of Food for Peace programming, they will receive new components (e.g., Community Visioning, Watershed Management planning, supplementary feeding) and maintenance support for existing Community Action Groups (CAGs).

### Community and Household Selection

All residents in selected wards are eligible to engage in interventions of their choosing, though some are better suited to sub-populations based on wealth, life stage, or differential vulnerability. Many interventions will reach and impact the poorest and most vulnerable members of the community – the strategy for reaching them is described in greater detail under each intervention. Some household interventions are naturally geared toward the poorest of the poor, like the safety nets. Some have been modified to be more purposefully inclusive of the poorest, directly addressing barriers to participation the most resource- constrained face – such as enabling access to VS&Ls by paying fees. Others cover everyone regardless of wealth or vulnerability – like the supplementary feeding.

Household wealth and vulnerability ranking will be based on the current WFP methodology whereby households rank themselves from poorest / most vulnerable to better off / least vulnerable based on number of livestock, household assets, previous harvest, receipt of remittances, engagement in formal employment or petty trade, and ability to do casual labor. Other vulnerabilities considered in the analysis include female-, child-, or elderly-headed households and households with members chronically ill, disabled, or orphans or high dependency ratios. WFP and the GOZ Department of Social Welfare use these uniform criteria to provide lean season and emergency food aid support. The rationale for using the WFP tool is to ensure the Activity team knows who the poorest are so they are not left out, it will not be used as exclusionary criteria.

##### FIGURE 1-6: TARGETING STRATEGY BY INTERVENTION



### Strategy for Targeting Different Sub-Populations

Amalima Loko will tailor interventions to address needs, vulnerabilities, and opportunities of different types of households and individuals across the five districts – including those that are extremely poor or chronically vulnerable, those with pregnant and lactating women and children under two (CU2), adolescents (aged 15–19), and young adults (20–35).[[54]](#endnote-55) Segmentation of our targeting strategy is based primarily on wealth, with provisions for age, life stage, and specific groups with limited resources, power, and agency. This recognizes that social and economic groups experience food insecurity, poverty, and environmental and economic shocks differently and therefore need customized solutions, messages, and interventions. Figure 1-6 shows several household interventions and the range of participants that they will target and benefit based on level of vulnerability. The light blue lines show where interventions have been modified to reach poorer and more vulnerable households.

Extremely poor households.The Activity’s work with the extremely poor aims to *ensure access to and increase use of revitalized traditional safety nets, reduce vulnerability to shocks, and increase their asset base*. The ZimStat Zimbabwe Poverty Report 2017 found that 33 percent of the population in the province are classified as extremely poor (falling under the Food Poverty Line, which is computed by valuing the average price of products in the minimum needs basket). For households classified as extremely poor and vulnerable, we will make strategic modifications to interventions, creating incentives and mitigating barriers to entry to ensure inclusion of extremely poor households. For example, for those with limited mobility due to disability, illness, or childcare responsibilities, we will promote market-based income-generating activities (IGAs) they can do in the home, like sewing, food preparation, or homestead poultry production (analyzed in the Preliminary Economic Analysis (PEA), Annex 17) and link them with more mobile villagers for trading. Older women will be engaged to care for children at watershed asset construction sites; we will reinvigorate village-based safety nets, such as grain banks, and explore ways to cover VS&L dues to foster participation by the poorest.

***Chronically*** vulnerable ***households.*** Chronically vulnerable households are those with some productive resources, such as land and labor and comprise the rest of the population in the target area. The primary aim for them is *to leverage their existing individual and collective resources and capacities and increase food production, enhance sustainable access to water*, *and increase and diversify IGAs.* We expect members of this sub-population to be heavily involved in many interventions, such as Community Visioning, and contribute labor for infrastructure improvements, increase agricultural productivity, and improve the health of their livestock. Together, the package of interventions provided to these households will build adaptive and absorptive capacity to plan for and recover from shocks with minimal external support. This highly heterogeneous sub-population includes men, women, youth, children, infants, the elderly, and people with disabilities whose experience of food insecurity, vulnerability, capacities, power dynamics and behaviors are highly varied. We will tailor interventions to these diverse dimensions; all recommended livelihood activities are analyzed for appropriateness in the preliminary economic analysis.

Pregnant and lactating women and caretakers of infants and young children at risk of acute and chronic malnutrition.In working with pregnant and lactating women and other caretakers of young children, Amalima Loko aims to *prevent malnutrition for children under five, increase adoption of recommended nutrition and hygiene behaviors, and enhance women’s agency and empowerment*. In addition to and complementing other interventions that increase availability and access to food and water, the Activity will increase adequate food consumption directly via an evidence-based blanket supplementary feeding program (BSFP). Because of the critical nature of children’s early cognitive development, Amalima Loko will target the entire sub-population for nutrition, hygiene, and family planning behavior change through Care Groups, messaging at BSFP distribution points, and the Male Champions Campaign. Since this sub-population overlaps with wealth-based sub-populations, we expect women in this group will participate in other interventions relevant to their wealth rankings.

Adolescents and young adults.Amalima Loko aims to support adolescents (aged 15–24) and young adults (25–35) *to access the knowledge and resources they need to earn and manage additional income, while addressing systemic cultural barriers to their participation in the economy and civil society.* The Activity will reach youth through flexible programming that delivers a mix of life skills, community engagement, entrepreneurial and transferable skills training, migration preparedness, VS&L, and new market opportunities. Amalima Loko will use proven modalities that support youth engagement such as sport and digital media and providing safe spaces to build confidence and encourage agency. All recommended livelihood activities are addressed in the PEA.

Whole-of-community for watershed management and WASH interventions.Interventions will *strengthen the community’s ability to plan and manage natural resources in a holistic, integrated, and sustainable way to ultimately improve water supply and quality for both productive and human use, and to improve sanitation and hygiene.* While knowledge and awareness of the value of natural capital (resources, ecosystem functions and services, biodiversity[[55]](#endnote-56)) will be raised across the population, sub-populations in a village will have different roles in various interventions. For example, farmers will engage in improved soil and crop management and grazing practices, youth will gain income and skills from infrastructure construction, and the poorest will have access to water sources for consumption.

## Technical Approach

The Amalima Loko Activity will address underlying causes of food insecurity and chronic vulnerability to shocks and stresses by supporting evidence-based and sustainable pathways out of poverty at the household and community levels. Overexploitation of natural resources in Matabeleland North, along with increasing negative climate impacts, have caused severe land degradation that reduces the quantity and quality of resources available to achieve food security and develop resilient livelihoods and increased the impacts of shocks and stressors. The Activity will improve social cohesion and the broader enabling environment; make landscape-level environmentally sustainable improvements to watersheds; and improving adaptive and absorptive capacities of individuals, households, organizations, and institutions. Amalima Loko builds social cohesion across interventions, defined as “a sense of shared purpose and trust among members of a given group or locality and the willingness of those group members to engage and cooperate with each other to survive and prosper”.

Taken together, the Amalima Loko interventions will result in a population in which everyone – especially women and youth - are more connected and supported by their community; more resilient to frequent shocks and stresses and able to be self-reliant and food secure.

### Evidence-Based Methodologies and Approaches

Amalima Loko will achieve results across Technical Purposes by capitalizing on the expertise of Zimbabwean and international partners (see Figure 1-7) and their experience implementing the successful Amalima Activity in Matabeleland. The team balances global industry leadership in food security, resilience, climate-smart agriculture, sustainable watershed management, gender equality and inclusion, participatory social and behavior change (SBC), and nutrition with deep-rooted local engagement in Matabeleland.

Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA), Organisation of Rural Association for Progress (ORAP), Dabane Water Workshops (Dabane), The Manoff Group (TMG), and the International Medical Corps (IMC) demonstrated effective collaboration on Amalima for over six years (see text box). Mercy Corps adds fresh perspectives and expertise. Our one-team approach will ensure integration across Technical Purposes and geographies to blend successful approaches with global best practices and innovative new ideas. The partnership approach for Amalima Loko builds on the keys to success identified by the current Amalima partners in a November 2019 reflection workshop, including using a multi-partner office, establishing clear reporting lines, cultivating a shared project identity, and developing a culture of accountability, trust, learning, and creativity.[[56]](#endnote-57)

Key Amalima Team Achievements

* Recognized as an exemplary DFSA in a 2018 FANTA SBC report
* Received a 2017 CLA Case Competition award for the Male Champion Campaign
* Stunting reduced from 31.7 to 24.5% from 2014 to 2019; underweight reduced from 14.6 to 6.5% over the same period
* Coping Strategy Index decreased from 33.8 to 25, indicating improved resilience
* Crop yields held steady and livestock conditions improved despite significant drought

Amalima Loko builds on and prioritizes several Amalima successes documented in the Final Evaluation Report, such as expanding and refining the approach to water infrastructure to a holistic watershed landscape approach. We will also scale up community engagement, making it more systematic, converting it to a full Community Visioning process. We will build up and formalize our commitment to developing a learning culture started by Amalima by incorporating the Refinement period, continuing the Learning Working Group, and conducting a number of foundational analyses and assessments – the Gender Analysis (Annex 7), PEA (Annex 17), and others. Refinement period areas of investigation are detailed throughout the technical approach and in Section 1.5.

##### FIGURE 1-7: AMALIMA LOKO PARTNERS AND THEIR ROLES

|  |
| --- |
| **CNFA (Prime).** Ensures a unified vision across Technical Purposes; leads climate-smart agriculture, livelihoods, and DRR. Oversees technical and financial quality, compliance, monitoring, evaluation, learning, cash for assets (CFA), food programming. Ensures design and implementation of inclusive, people-centered sustainability strategies. Primary client liaison. |
| **ORAP (Local partner).** Leads field-level implementation, including commodity and satellite field office management. Leads community and local government engagement through the Community Visioning process. Engages directly with program participants, managing 76 Field Officers as the project’s frontline change agents. |
| **Dabane (Local partner).** Provides technical leadership in sustainable watershed management, focusing on mapping and planning, identifying and assessing risks and opportunities, and engineering water infrastructure. Ensures sustainable, locally appropriate, and integrated watershed management solutions across Technical Purposes. |
| **IMC (International partner).**Provides technical leadership of maternal and child health and nutrition, and WASH activities; integrates nutrition across interventions. |
| **TMG (International partner).**Leads design and implementation of SBC strategies to facilitate uptake of improved behaviors across Purposes. Supports design of studies and pilot activities during the Refinement period; ensures ongoing effectiveness of program approaches through continuous learning. |
| **Mercy Corps (International partner).** Leads integrated design and implementation of resilience and diversified employment and entrepreneurship strategies. Mainstreams gender and youth empowerment; fosters innovation and evidence-based best practices for social inclusion and resilience measurement. With ORAP, tailors global Community Visioning tools to local context. |

Building on Amalima successes.Amalima’s legacy is an important contextual factor in Matabeleland. Despite the deteriorating economic situation and recurrent, sharply heightened food insecurity due to drought, the Amalima Final Evaluation Report and FANTA’s 2018 review of SBC methods in FFP programs note that Amalima’s success is widely recognized, and participants, communities, and government stakeholders express pride in their development, watershed, and food security achievements. Local communities and stakeholders show a new sense of optimism, community cohesion, and ownership of interventions by adopting and financing activities. For example, communities continue to organize Amalima Days, AGRITEX extension agents work with and support Amalima Village Agriculture Coordinators (VACs), and MOHCC uses learnings from Amalima to finalize the national rollout of Care Groups. The 2018 FANTA report notes the program prioritized local ownership via intentional design decisions like providing “no handouts” and de-linking Care Group participation from food aid.[[57]](#endnote-58) Amalima’s legacy has become part of the culture, providing a strong foundation through its reputation, established and accepted approaches, and relationships on which Amalima Loko can build.

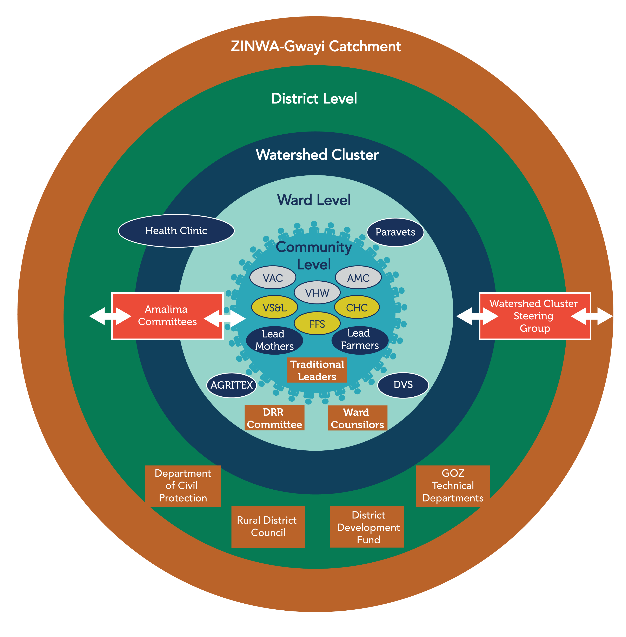
***Local*** leadership ***committed to adaptive management and learning.*** The Amalima Loko leadership team has local knowledge and relationships and a commitment to learning at its core. Matabeleland-based local partners ORAP and Dabane have partnered with communities for decades to address the region’s unique food security and NRM challenges. Chief of Party (COP) David Brigham has over ten years of experience in Zimbabwe, seven of them in Matabeleland, where he started up and led Amalima. The Amalima Loko technical management team, led by Ndebele speakers Nqobile Ncube, Nicholas Nyathi, and Pamela Murakwani from the Amalima program, combine deep knowledge of Matabeleland with strong technical backgrounds and diverse international experience. As part of the Amalima learning agenda, the team held a reflection workshop in November 2019 to generate and document lessons learned and best practices from the partnership between Amalima implementing organizations. “Grounded leadership” from the COP and team as a whole was identified as one key to success in the partnership, with participants noting flexible and adaptive management and “levelheaded key personnel acting with maturity, consistency, integrity and respect.”[[58]](#endnote-59)

The Final Evaluation Report praised Amalima’s flexibility – for example, in adjusting implementation due to drought conditions, scaling up successful interventions like Amalima Days, and creating innovative campaigns to address persistent gender norms impeding the Activity from realizing its full potential. Program staff said they built skills by learning from mistakes. Amalima Loko will continue this spirit of learning and adapting through intentional research, reflection, and re-tooling interventions to achieve greater success. Learning will be especially critical in the Refinement period, when elements of the ToC will be applied and tested and new hypotheses created to address shortcomings. The Activity will have an internal Learning Working Group that meets quarterly, a Steering Committee of key staff and external stakeholders, and an Outreach Working Group to help share learnings with the wider development community, GOZ, and civil society. The Learning Working Group will be modeled on the Amalima Learning Unit, which was added in Year 4 to formalize Amalima’s focus on learning and adaptive management. A summary and sample of Learning Unit reports are included in Annex 20.

Efficient operational structure. Amalima Loko will be led from Bulawayo, where the COP, DCOP, technical leads, learning unit leads, and administrative and finance managers will work from a shared program office. Our staffing and management structure address the operational challenges of a large, widely dispersed project area and promotes cost-effectiveness by deploying field-based Technical Coordinators and Field Officer staff. Field offices in Lupane and Hwange will serve as district offices and regional hubs; sub-offices in Binga and Nkayi will support commodity management and representation in those districts. Each operational watershed cluster will be served by technical Field Officers in agriculture, nutrition, watershed, and Community Visioning based in the cluster.

Strengthen service delivery systems and community groups***.*** Building on and adapting successful approaches from Amalima, the Activity team will work in partnership with existing service delivery providers and community groups to embrace inclusive participation and leadership toward generating greater capacities and ownership. Annex 26 details the community service provider positions with which Amalima Loko will engage and motivation factors that will lead to their sustainability. At the district level, we will gain buy-in and coordinate planning with the Rural District Council and Rural District Development Plans. We will work closely with the Department of Civil Protection at the district level to revitalize DRR structures and processes, ensuring excluded groups are engaged and represented in decision-making processes. We will work with water catchment committees like ZINWA and the Gwayi Sub-Catchment Council to strengthen coordination and planning mechanisms for watershed management. The Activity will rely on community-level service delivery institutions for sustained engagement and expertise and to support behavior change. These include Ward councilors, MOHCC (health center staff), AGRITEX, and Department of Veterinary Service (DVS) extension officers, DRR Committees, and traditional and church leaders. VHWs, lead farmers, and paravets will provide last-mile support. Existing community groups will be empowered to engage in and direct their own local development and resilience plans and actions; these include VS&L, Farmer Field School (FFS), producer, and youth groups and community health clubs. Figure 1-8 shows service providers and community groups at all levels.

Integrate behavior-centered thinking across all interventions.There are many groups, committees, and plans at different levels (village, ward, district, sub- catchment, and catchment) across Matabeleland. Some are led by traditional leaders and others are existing government structures or civil society groups. Amalima Loko will engage and strengthen these existing entities and create new committees that are key to the achievement of Activity objectives. Annex 25 provides an analysis of these entities. Using SBC strategies, the Activity will engage community members and other local stakeholders in a facilitated process to identify priority behaviors that are key to achieving each intermediate outcome, sub-purpose, and purpose.



##### FIGURE 1-8: EXISTING SERVICE PROVISION ENTITIES

The Activity will identify what is already known about barriers, motivators, and structural factors for these priority behaviors through analysis of secondary data, rapid formative assessments, and initial phases of the Community Visioning process. This will prioritize the inventory of evidence gaps for key behavioral areas that will inform planning for Refinement period research and development of the Activity-wide SBC strategy. Selected priority behaviors and associated barriers and motivators will be integrated into Activity monitoring and collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) plans to ensure the Activity’s behavior-centered lens continues across implementation and sectors. Priority or “high-win” behaviors that support increased resilience and have the greatest payoff for women and youth will be prioritized in the Refinement period to inform future programming. For example, Amalima Loko will use people-centered design to identify new water or agricultural technologies that will most impact women’s time poverty and labor, which can lead to big wins for their productivity, health seeking, and care behaviors.

### Programming Principles and Examples

Figure 1-9 summarizes the 11 principles of Amalima Loko woven throughout the design.

##### FIGURE 1-9: AMALIMA LOKO PROGRAMMING PRINCIPLES

| **Design for people-centered approaches** |
| --- |
| The Community Visioning process is the people-centered foundation of Amalima Loko that will:   * Ensure intentional inclusion of the underrepresented. * Focus on ecological, economic, and social (nature, wealth, power) community components as an integrated, interdependent system * Serve as the platform through which people invest in the development of their own community systems. * Leverage existing resources, networks, and capacities and strengthen traditional customs of social cohesion and social safety nets. * Strengthen CAGs to lead in developing, managing, and sustaining key community assets, resources, and services. |
| **Tailor the prioritization and focus of interventions** |
| * Amalima Loko prioritizes social cohesion as foundational to the success of all other interventions and high-level outcomes. * Interventions are prioritized by focusing on the most limiting factors restricting food and nutrition security, which are identified in the ToC: limited access to water resources for livelihoods and health, land degradation, lack of community planning, insufficient support from service and coordination mechanisms, low and unreliable income, and poor health and nutrition. |
| **Strive to address four factors of sustainability** |
| **Resources** required to sustain outcomes are generated in the community (e.g., user fees, community labor) and are environmentally friendly and climate smart.  **Capacity.** After the activity ends, access to ongoing training, mentoring, and support will be available from GOZ extension workers or private sector input suppliers.  **Motivation.** Returns are sufficient to ensure continued motivation (e.g., paravets earn income, Lead Mothers attain status and prestige).  **Linkages** will be formed with GOZ and private service providers, among community groups (e.g., VS&L, Care Groups), and between community and GOZ planning committees. |
| **Leverage and link past and ongoing food and nutrition security programming and learning to strengthen collective impact** |
| * The Activity draws heavily on well-documented lessons from Amalima and will modify approaches and interventions to suit the context * Formation of Amalima Committees as the Activity’s main focal point will ensure harmonization and avoid duplication with government and other donor plans and interventions. * The Learning Working Group, Outreach Working Group, and Steering Committee provide regular reflection points for internal and external learning and sharing and results from the Learning, Resilience, and Inclusion Unit will be shared with stakeholders and inform interventions. * Joint work planning with government and other donor-funded programs, such as WFP, will ensure appropriate sequencing and layering of interventions across programs. |
| **Address social dynamics and local governance to strengthen local systems** |
| * A comprehensive SBC strategy will inform all interventions and identify strategies to reduce barriers, increase motivators, and create enabling environments for positive behaviors at the household, group, and government levels. * The Activity will focus heavily on addressing the social dynamics of systemic and behavioral causes for excluding women and youth from economic, leadership, and governance spaces. |
| **Consider how migration impacts the social and economic dynamics of the community** |
| * Community Visioning will increase awareness of the pros and cons of migration, prepare those planning to migrate, support localized strategies to improve remittance management, and build community support for those who remain. |
| **Address recurrent shocks, economic volatility, and high levels of acute food insecurity** |
| * An integrated watershed management approach addresses land management practices holistically to mitigate some of the worst impacts of climate change, produce more food, and maximize equitable human welfare without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems. * DRR Committees will be more capable of designing comprehensive plans and include and scenario planning for shocks. * Infrastructure and management processes resulting from the watershed management approach will support revitalization and ensure households can access food and water, enhance their self-sufficiency, and enable them to recover quickly from shocks. |
| **Promote gender equity and integration** |
| * The context-specific, cross-cutting gender strategy will guide interventions that transform women’s and young people’s agency and the structures and institutions that govern their lives and empower women and driver greater gender equality. * Ongoing formative gender analysis will examine gendered attitudes, norms, and behaviors that impede or support improved food and nutrition security, household power dynamics, women’s time poverty, and women’s and adolescents’ decision-making. |
| **Promote youth empowerment** |
| * Youth interventions will emphasize life skills, healthy behaviors, family planning, employment, and entrepreneurship; youth will be engaged as co-designers to ensure interventions reflect their needs and aspirations. * Youth capacity and agency will grow via participation in agribusiness, off-farm livelihoods, service provision, VS&L, and WASH activities. |
| **Mitigate human-wildlife conflict** |
| * Community Visioning will support development of strategies to mitigate human-wildlife conflict where it is identified as a priority. * Collaborating with innovative local organizations such as Softfoot Alliance to develop customized approaches to deterring wildlife from ruining crops and livestock. |

### Technical Sectors and Interventions

### Overarching Goal: Improve Food Security Through Increased Food Access and Sustainable Watershed Management

##### FIGURE 1-10: DIRECT PARTICIPANT HOUSEHOLDS TARGETED WITH MULTIPLE INTERVENTIONS, BY PURPOSE

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Total Unique Direct Participant Households** | **P1 only** | **P1 P2** | **P1 P3** | **P2 only** | **P2 P3** | **P3 only** | **P1 P2 P3** |
| 67,848 | 188 | 400 | 8,665 | 1,813 | 3,087 | 8,694 | 45,000 |
| \*This table shows high integration across Technical Purposes. 85% of participants will participate in interventions in two or more purposes and 68% will participate in interventions under all three purposes. | | | | | | | |

### Purpose 1: Enhanced and Inclusive Local Ownership over Food Security and Resilience Planning and Development

|  |
| --- |
| **Purpose 1: Expected High-Level Results** |
| Percent of people living on less than $1.90/day reduced to 80% |
| Mean percentage shortfall of the poor relative to the $1.90/day decreased by 16% |
| 3,500 representatives actively participate in 87 Amalima Committees for visioning, planning, and action |
| 165,300 community members participate in collective action for visioning, planning, and action |
| 87 DRR plans developed and implemented by targeted communities |

Approach. CNFA designed Amalima Loko to be people-centered at all levels – village, ward, community group, and watershed. Communities’ ability to identify their own priorities and define solutions themselves is a development outcome that will foster greater sustainable impact and strengthen social cohesion and, ultimately, resilience. Our Community Visioning approach builds on existing capacities, social capital, and networks so the target population can articulate on its own terms its own vision of a healthy, productive society. This process values every voice while building partnership among communities, civil society, government, and the private sector. A representative group of community members – including women, young people, local and traditional leadership, and representatives of the DRR Committee, will be formed into Amalima Committees. Community Visioning will give specific focus to increasing youth participation and building trust and openness across generations. Migration will be another focus to reinforce that migrants are still part of the community and to help ensure potential migrants are prepared and empowered. Committees will be trained in leadership and participatory planning to create actionable, realistic Ward Transformation Plans (working with GOZ technical staff) outlining ways to achieve the community’s vision. The plans will be carried out by existing CAGs or other local institutions. Community Visioning will support and inform current and future District Development Plans and ward-level DRR Plans and identify how to engage and strengthen local systems and services. Engaging local leadership and institutions in the process builds their technical capacity and reinforces trust, motivation, transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness of governance and civil society processes.

#### Sub-purpose 1.1. Improved planning and action at the community level

###### **IO** 1.1.1. Improved strategies and structures for inclusive community engagement

The Amalima Loko Community Visioning approach responds to needs identified in the ToC that require functional local strategies and structures as a necessary precondition to ensuring ownership of food security and resilience planning and development. The team designed a process that blends international best practices from the Mercy Corps CATALYSE process (see text box) with ORAP methodologies proven to work in Matabeleland North. Community Visioning is an iterative process in which communities analyze the integrated components and linkages of their social-ecological system[[59]](#endnote-60) and express their goals and values in an honest and open atmosphere. While community leaders are important to this process, they are complemented by marginalized groups – women, youth, those with chronic illness or disability, and others. This puts people in a position to seize their agency, as summarized by ORAP’s community development principles (see text box below). The process comprises three stages, described below. The process will start in December 2020/January 2021 for Phase I clusters, followed by Phase II clusters in September/October 2021. Interventions under IO 1.1.1 target the whole of community.

Catalyze

This signature Mercy Corps community mobilization methodology provides communities with a roadmap to develop a common vision for the future. Together, community members identify common needs and priorities; articulate the natural, human, physical, and other resources they have; and create and conduct projects to advance a community vision. CATALYSE can also demonstrate the value of good governance. Communities will gain first-hand experience in representative participation, transparency, and accountability. Ultimately, CATALYSE encourages more informed, connected, and active community members who can work collectively, advocate to their leaders, and promote change.

Intervention 1.1.1.1. Community Visioning – Preparation and Planning Stage.In this stage, Amalima Loko management and District Representatives will introduce the Activity to GOZ national and provincial authorities and Rural District Councils, explaining how it will build on Amalima’s achievements and describing the watershed cluster approach. Partner Dabane will develop detailed maps of micro-catchments within each watershed cluster using remotely sensed images and geographic information system (GIS) software. Maps will contain land use information such as forest, wetland, crop coverage, and grazing land conditions and identify erosion, wetland or stream bank damage, flooding risk, and other features that community stakeholders will verify. Intervention 2.1.1.1 describes the watershed mobilization process.

ORAP Community Development Principles

Zihluze: Examine yourself.

Ziqoqe: Mobilize yourself.

Zenzele: Do it yourself.

Zimisele: Commit yourself.

Ziqhatshe: Be self-employed.

Zimele: Be self-reliant/independent.

Ziqhenye: Be proud of yourself and your achievements.

Qogelela: One day at a time, save, invest, or mobilize resources.

Once Phase I clusters[[60]](#endnote-61) and constituent wards are jointly identified and prioritized with Rural District Councils, Amalima Loko Field Officers and District Representatives will hold ward-level consultations with traditional leaders and stakeholders to introduce the Activity and its comprehensive Community Visioning process, followed by a broader ward-level event for representatives of all villages, and village-level sensitization meetings. During this period, Nutrition Field Officers will also hold consultation meetings at all clinics in the target area.

After sensitization meetings, villages will elect representatives to ward-level Amalima Committees – essentially a steering committee for the Community Visioning process and a focal point for Activity engagement. Members will likely include a Ward Councilor, representatives of DRR Committees, and agricultural and health extension workers. The Activity will determine gender and youth quotas to ensure community representation. This core group will plan, promote, and oversee the development, monitoring, and implementation of Ward Transformation Plans. While formal planning occurs at the ward level, village representatives on Amalima Committees, Amalima Loko Field Officers, and other extension officers will engage continuously with constituent villages to ensure active participation. Amalima Committee members will be trained, coached, and mentored by the Community Visioning Field Officer to conduct and lead Community Visioning. While CNFA recognizes that forming new committees is not usually ideal, no current functional coordination entity is representative, inclusive, politically neutral, and able to work effectively with all government departments and traditional leaders.

During this stage, the Activity M&E Team and Field Officers will register households in Phase I clusters, working with clinics and VHWs to identify those with PLW and CU2.[[61]](#endnote-62) This will enable fast-tracking of the BSFP for these sub-populations, with the first rations distributed in May 2021. Other Refinement period activities, studies, and pilot interventions will begin in some villages and wards after community mobilization, including SBC formative research and the gender assessment.

The Agriculture Field Officer, with AGRITEX and community members will conduct an initial pre-harvest agricultural assessment to document land preparation, crop choices and planting practices, followed by a post-harvest crop assessment. Timing around the 2021 harvest is critical to develop a baseline for use in the refine and implement process and to inform climate-smart agricultural interventions for the next season. This process will identify current and potential lead farmers.

The Community Visioning Field Officer will guide each Amalima Committee and its constituent villages in a full assessment of their social, economic, and natural resources (e.g., vegetation cover, land quality, wildlife, livestock, available labor, water sources, jobs, community groups, capacities) to identify assets and areas for improvement.Following the Watershed Cluster Steering Group process (Intervention 2.1.1.1), Amalima Committees will share micro-catchment and cluster GIS maps with villages within a given micro-catchment for discussion and analysis and will facilitate community ground-truthing of the mapping process carried out by youth and others whom the Activity will train as Mapping Technicians (see Intervention 2.1.1.2). Next, communities and relevant stakeholders will brainstorm development priorities and analyze their potential impact. Finally, interventions will be prioritized and planned (including discussions of the needs of different sub-populations) and resources and financing discussed for priority interventions. Development priorities will be articulated in a Vision Statement that spell out specific community goals. The Amalima Committee will set practical, attainable, and measurable steps and targets, and a timeline for achieving the Vision Statement – articulated in a Ward Transformation Plan. This plan will incorporate aspects of the Watershed Cluster Plan (described in Intervention 2. 1.2.1 and will be shared with the Rural District Council for coordination. It should be completed nine to ten months after Community Visioning begins.

Intervention 1.1.1.2. Community Visioning – Community Action Stage. As the planning stage ends and the action stage begins, Refinement period learning, such as formative SBC research, environmental research, and a deeper understanding of risk and vulnerability, will influence action. The lead researchers will present findings to Amalima Committees and CAGs to inform the development of interventions financed by the Activity and integrated into training curricula. Based on the findings, communities may decide to form new CAGs to enhance specific resilience capacities or address development goals. Field Officers will train and mentor Amalima Committee members alongside government extension officers on leadership, monitoring, conflict management, and team management. Amalima Committees and government stakeholders will work together to support CAGs to conduct community- and household-level interventions using the commuinty and household’s own assets and capacities. This will empower groups, build confidence, and strengthen social cohesion. The Activity will provide direct funding and support for the highest-priority projects (outlined in Purposes 2 and 3) identified in Ward Transformation Plans and within the Amalima Loko scope (water management, land use, income generation, nutrition/health). Because evidence shows deeper and integrated programming has higher impact and sustainability,[[62]](#endnote-63) it is envisioned that a community will likely receive support for multiple interventions if it has the interest, bandwidth, and resources to participate. Proposed interventions are based on CNFA’s extensive learning from Amalima and complemented by a thorough and participatory (including field focus groups) problem analysis for Amalima Loko. The exact mix of interventions will be driven by the community’s will and ability and informed by feasibility (e.g., water availability, agro-ecological conditions), a gender analysis, and the PEA.

Community Action Groups

* VS&L Groups
* Farmer Field Schools
* Producer groups
* Care Groups
* Community Health Clubs
* Youth Groups
* Male Champion Groups
* Asset Management Committees

Intervention 1.1.1.3. Community visioning – Sustaining Stage. Most mobilization and strategic planning work will occur in the first year of Community Visioning, but efforts of Amalima Committees will continue over the life of the Activity, overseen and supported by Amalima Loko staff. During this stage, the team will help communities identify and build the resources, skills, capacities, and linkages needed to sustain community planning and action after the project ends. Support to Amalima Committees will gradually transition to district- and ward-level GOZ staff. By Year 4, Amalima Committees will fully drive this process, supported by GOZ staff with assistance from Amalima limited to mentoring and help with troubleshooting. The activities in this stage include:

Annual review meetings. Amalima Committees will convene all-community annual reviews at the ward level to recognize achievements, identify areas for improvement, propose potential changes, evaluate community participation, discuss future targets, and adjust plans as needed.

Community progress review meetings. Regular community progress review meetings will assess progress at the village level and help communities work together to sustain and refine their Transformation Plans as necessary, engaging in inter- and intra-community conversations and explorations and identifying internal resources and capacities.

Learning visits. Amalima Committees, with specific CAGs, will visit neighboring sites to motivate groups and share ideas and experiences. Learning visits to Tsholotsho and other Amalima implementation areas can demonstrate both challenges faced and the impact of interventions that are more mature, weaned from support, and reflect sustainability. Learning visits can include meetings with VS&L groups, Asset Management Committees (AMCs), Community Health Clubs (CHCs), DRR Committees. They are opportunities to observe completed assets, labor-saving technologies, and resilience measures such as flood-proof housing.

Amalima Days

In FY19, it became clear that communities highly valued Amalima Days and the opportunity they presented to bring people from multiple villages together with government and private sector stakeholders. Communities felt a sense of pride and importance that government officials would visit and learn about them and their achievements. Communities wanted more than the eight days Amalima planned, so 14 were held. About 6,500 people participated. Communities took ownership of the events, planning the celebrations and selecting themes and priorities. A total of 3,920 Amalima volunteers were recognized. Private sector firms donated all prizes for Amalima Days.

Local celebrations and exhibitions. CAGs are eager to showcase their successes at launch events and other community-led celebrations designed to increase participation across activities and build excitement about community engagement, such as Amalima Days (see text box). Each event will have a theme (e.g., livestock, completion of a dam), with prizes and recognition of achievements. Starting in June 2021, each Phase I cluster will hold its first Amalima Day and agricultural fair to recognize top producers and celebrate communities’ successes to date. Amalima Days will be held during the life of the Activity, at intervals determined by Amalima Committees and their communities.

###### IO 1.1.2. Effective and functional village-based groups for community action

Based on the ToC, effective groups of local people expressing their priorities through action are a precondition for improved local ownership of food security and resilience planning and development. Amalima Loko will therefore focus on the effectiveness, sustainability, and cohesion of existing CAGs or those that emerge from the Community Visioning process (IO 1.1.1). The number and composition of these CAGs depends on Ward Transformation Plans. CAGs are a critical mechanism to carry out those plans and support the development of community assets for watershed development and rangeland management, assist community members to develop individual assets, provide platforms for broadening extension services, build community governance institutions and capacities, drive the development agenda, serve a critical role in enhancing social cohesion and social safety nets, and provide a platform to model positive and address negative social dynamics and behaviors. Amalima Loko will support any CAG that enhances food security, livelihoods, gender equality, heath, hygiene, income, or resilience, including community-led safety nets for the most vulnerable. The aim will be to build CAGs’ ability to support sustainable change within the community over the long term.

Intervention 1.1.2.1. Train and mentor CAG leadership. Amalima Loko Field Officers and key stakeholders such as AGRITEX and VHWs will hold quarterly trainings for CAG leaders to build capacity in democratic governance, transparency, facilitation, planning, recordkeeping, conflict management, gender equality, environmental compliance, technical skills, and financial management. Curricula will be drawn from Amalima, CATALYSE, or GOZ training materials, modified as needed to reflect localized concerns and context. Trainings will build the skills of both the CAG members and the key trainers. The sessions will also support the development of linkages between GOZ technical staff, private sector suppliers, and others to maintain training support after the Activity ends.

Intervention 1.1.2.2. Support CAG leadership to create and implement a sustainable resource development plan. Some CAGs (e.g., AMCs, those providing safety nets) may need recurring resources to maintain infrastructure or conduct an activity sustainably. Amalima Loko will invest in capital costs of assets or for activity start-up but will not pay recurring maintenance costs as this is not sustainable. The Activity will work with CAG and community leaders to develop a plan for those costs before investing in a proposed asset, and then mentor the CAG until it can function independently.

Intervention 1.1.2.3. Recognize high-achieving CAGs and communities. The Activity will recognize high-achieving villages and wards or specific CAGs for results in participation, inclusion, or impact through Amalima Days or other events such as World Breastfeeding Week, World Food Day, or International Women’s Day and may include prizes donated by the private sector, such as agricultural inputs or tools (plows, hoes, stock feed), kitchen utensils, soap, or certificates or plaques. For example, a Care Group may win an award for building membership and inclusivity by mentoring and supporting adolescent mothers; or a garden group for consuming and selling new products in a village.

###### IO 1.1.3. Adequate and reliable village-based safety nets

There is a community tradition of providing social safety nets to the poorest, most vulnerable, or those who experience shocks. These safety nets have been overwhelmed over time due to frequent large-scale shocks that impact entire villages, and government safety nets are often insufficient. The ToC observes that improved localized planning should include local safety nets for the most vulnerable as a complement to formal government safety nets. Interventions under this IO will focus on re-establishing traditional village safety nets using the increased food, assets, savings and income generated through other program interventions. In addition to the those described below, Amalima Loko will encourage VS&Ls to establish social funds that serve as emergency funds to support group members or those in the wider community who face shocks (see Intervention 3.1.1.2).

Intervention 1.1.3.1. Train village leaders to leverage existing safety net programs. To ensure vulnerable households take advantage of government-run benefits programs, Amalima Loko will train traditional leaders on the operations of existing programs, their selection and eligibility criteria, distribution or pay points, and how to identify eligible households in their villages to help connect those households to those formal safety net structures. However, the government programs are under-resourced and irregular. Accordingly, Amalima Loko, per the targeting strategy, will work to re-establish traditional village- level safety nets that distribute money, food, assets, or other resources to community members during times of strife. Because they vary in structure, the methods through which the Activity can help reinvigorate, strengthen, and support the long-term resilience of community safety net structure will differ among communities. The Community Visioning process will identify for community leaders ways and resources to enhance the efficacy and sustainability of village-level safety nets to augment government or donor programs. All informal safety nets will ensure equal inclusion and access for women, youth, and vulnerable groups. Amalima Loko will pilot provision of safety nets to gauge the viability of this intervention. Activity staff will coordinate with the Social Welfare Department, Drought Relief Committee, and AGRITEX to facilitate this process and provide a platform for leaders to share information and compare successful approaches.

Intervention 1.1.3.2. Establish and support community grain banks. With improved crop productivity from increased water access and agricultural interventions, and increased incomes and assets, Amalima Loko will pilot the establishment of village grain banks in select villages where feasible (sufficient grain stores) and appropriate (village leaders are willing to participate and develop creative solutions) to reach the poorest per our targeting strategy. Village grain banks are a traditional and indigenous safety net that offer some measure of sustainability. They have fallen out of use due to political expedience, lack of creativity in implementation, and repeated poor harvests. Top-down reinstatement efforts have been largely ineffective. Financial literacy and agricultural production training and promotion of transparent safety net mechanisms will support improved decision-making on how and when to shift grain bank resources to meet community needs in the short term and sustain safety net resources in the long term. Where productivity is low and grain stores are insufficient to put into a community grain bank, a village may opt to start a community plot to supply the grain bank or buy grain. The pilot will generate learning on grain bank models to be shared across the target area to encourage adoption of the most successful, locally appropriate models.

#### **Sub-purpose 1.2. Improved responsiveness of local government coordination and service mechanisms**

###### IO 1.2.1. Improved government capacity for service delivery

The ToC identifies the need for local governments to be more responsive to the needs of constituents. To accomplish this, they must increase their capacity to provide improved services. To target this type of transformational change, which will support communities’ ability to respond, cope, and adapt to both acute shocks and protracted stresses, Amalima Loko will pursue two key approaches to improving government service delivery: 1) improve planning, transparency, and accountability at the village, ward, and district levels to provide a channel for increased citizen engagement; and 2), support GOZ staff to build the capacity of community extension agents (e.g., VACs, Lead Farmers, paravets, Lead Mothers) and CAGs (e.g., FFSs, CHCs, Care Groups) to provide quality outputs or services to community members. The first strategy is described below, and the second will largely be addressed by engaging GOZ actors in interventions described under Purposes 2 and 3. The Activity will build on the trust that Amalima has established over the last seven years with government stakeholders in the region. Rather than directly funding government activities, the team will leverage resources to address their operational challenges and build capacity by involving them in Amalima Loko interventions.

Intervention 1.2.1.1. Promote transparent and responsive ward planning processes. There are a number of government-mandated ward-level processes and committees and various ward or village ad hoc committees. A few have some functionality (DRR Committees, health center committees), but others that remain non-functional (including WDCs and ward FNSCs). Amalima Loko will not attempt to resuscitate every committee, recognizing that government resources are insufficient to sustain them (and some are politicized or unwanted by communities). Amalima Loko will ensure that members of functional committees are represented on Amalima Committees and that learning and information generated by the Activity is shared with them. DRR and health center committees will receive training as required from Amalima Loko technical staff, working with government staff, to enable them to better perform their functions in the community and link to their district-level counterparts. Over the course of the Activity, Amalima Loko will work with communities and government stakeholders to determine which ward-level committees may be viable and acceptable in a central coordination role post-program – whether WDCs, FNSCs, or a continuation of the Amalima committee.

Intervention 1.2.1.2. Improve linkages between communities and service providers.Development planning from the village level up to wards, district government, and non-governmental service providers has historically not been well coordinated. The Activity will facilitate connections between government officials and to CAGs working on issues relevant to their areas of work – such as MOHCC or clinic officials, AGRITEX, or representatives of DRR Committees. This engagement will start with Community Visioning and continue throughout the Activity. Ongoing engagement of officials or other service providers in Amalima Loko interventions will expose them to local needs and issues, challenges faced, and resilience capacities being developed. The Activity team will invite relevant government and other stakeholder staff to village-, ward-, or cluster- level trainings or gatherings –venue where they can engage with and learn about village-level initiatives.

###### IO 1.2.2. Increased social accountability and demand for government and non-governmental services

For government and other service providers to fulfil their roles and duties, all community members (including those who are traditionally not heard) must be able to voice their demand for services and hold the appropriate entity accountable for quality delivery. For this reason, the ToC includes social accountability and demand for services as a precondition for improving government responsiveness. Social accountability provides a framework for citizens to engage with government processes and shine a light on decision-making to hold officials accountable. Amalima’s recent experience confirms that a collaborative approach to win-win solutions is more effective than shaming ineffective or unresponsive officials.[[63]](#endnote-64)A more functional governance system nurtures constructive dialogue and openness between government and citizens. Social accountability efforts can thus result in more informed and empowered citizens and more transparent decision-making based on collaboration and good faith from all sides.

Intervention 1.2.2.1. Citizens apply social accountability mechanisms.The Activity will train and mentor CAGs to identify and implement appropriate social accountability tools, such as suggestion boxes, in their wards. Citizen scorecards for specific services or citizen report cards on ward-level performance across an issue area, such as health services or sustainable water management, are tools that can be useful. Amalima Loko will also train CAGs to conduct social audits to track and analyze whether wards, departments, or other service providers, including donor-funded activities – and the CAGs themselves – are following through on promises made during dialogue or planning sessions. Social audits are useful to examine performance on inclusion issues, for example by monitoring adherence to promises about naming youth or gender focal points, conducting activities to support vulnerable populations, or incorporating the suggestions of such bodies as youth advisory councils. The Activity will enable cooperation on social accountability efforts across CAGs and villages on the performance of government and other service providers. Connecting on common issues and needs that are included in Ward Transformation Plans provides a foundation for collaboration; and groups will also be able to engage in strategic advocacy to promote broader ward-level action on these issues.

###### IO 1.2.3. Improved community hazard preparedness and response

Ideally, the structure and function of ward-level DRR Committees should facilitate a two-way flow of information between the village and district to reflect and resolve the most pressing and context-specific needs. However, many DRR Committees are not fully operational, hindering communication and generating serious repercussions for household and community resilience. Being prepared for and able to respond to shocks is critical precondition to achieving improved food security and resilience outcomes. As such, this is identified in the ToC as an IO. Based on Amalima’s experience, the gap in effectiveness for DRR plans is due to lack of knowledge of DRR principles and guidance on the planning process, a perception of the plans as mere wish lists for external funding, lack of access to quality technical expertise, and the absence of broader community involvement in the process. Like Amalima, Amalima Loko will respond to these gaps in capacity and coverage by building the capacity of DRR Committees and assisting communities to reconstitute committees in wards where they are not functional. DRR Committees will identify comprehensive issues to be addressed through self-funding and organization and will develop plans that meet district and provincial DRR guidelines. DRR planning will be evidence-based and closely linked to the Community Visioning and watershed cluster planning processes to ensure each ward has realistic plans for communication and mobilizing resources at all levels in the event of a disaster. As with the watershed community mapping exercise, Amalima Loko will incorporate youth and the most vulnerable populations in DRR planning.

Intervention 1.2.3.1. Assess the coverage and capacity of DRR Committees. As part of the Community Visioning process, Amalima Loko will assess all 87 ward-level DRR Committees (87) in targeted clusters to identify where they are active or inactive, as well as places where DRR Committees do not exist. The assessment will account for the extent to which DRR Committees represent the interests of all community members, especially women, youth, and the most vulnerable households. The Activity will work with DRR Committees to identify gaps in their capacity to implement successful, sustainable DRR systems and gaps for non-existent DRR Committees. DRR Committees should 1) design and activate disaster readiness plans; 2) mobilize appropriate resources and activate lines of communication at the onset of a disaster; 3) develop a contextually appropriate early warning system; and 4) prepare and submit annual plans to the Department of Civil Protection. DRR Committees should know whom to include and inform of their plans to ensure that necessary stakeholders from the village to the district levels are aware of their intended roles and can be mobilized when disaster strikes. They should also be able to use, interpret, and disseminate official data from the Meteorological Services Department so people in their areas can make improved agricultural and other land use decisions. These roles should be decided by local stakeholders, with buy-in from community authorities.

Intervention 1.2.3.2. Build the capacity of DRR Committees. The Activity will organize a training-of-trainers for the district-level Department of Civil Protection to mentor and build the capacity of DRR Committees to create feasible, context-specific plans and realize their duties. Roles and lines of communication will be defined early to gain buy-in from district officials and ward representative.

Amalima Loko Community Visioning Field Officers will engage with communities at the watershed cluster level for identification and prioritization of risks by DRR committees. Working closely with trainers from the Department of Civil Protection, Amalima Loko Agriculture/Natural Resources Officers will train and build the capacity of the DRR committees on DRR principles, risk identification and prioritization, and DRR plan development. The training will be practically oriented with participants divided into small groups with each group assigned to a village where they will go through the DRR planning process. The Amalima Loko Agriculture and Livelihoods Officers, together with the government Civil Protection Unit officers, will provide the necessary ongoing support during field visits to support DRR plan development. Amalima Loko will train DRR committees to conduct community stakeholder consultation meetings to develop DRR plans, ensuring that plans reflect the community’s goals and needs. Amalima Loko will support DRR Committees to understand the law and policies relating to water management and water use and strengthen their planning skills with respect to human, environmental, and resource exploitation-related hazards. DRR Plans feed directly into District Plans developed by the Rural District Council, thereby building accountability.

Gender, youth, and social inclusion. Amalima Loko Purpose 1 will approach inclusion through two strategies. First, community processes, structures, leadership, and membership will represent all groups, including those often excluded such as youth, women, and ethnic minorities, to engage all members and create clear opportunities for participation and leadership. Based on Amalima’s experience, achieving inclusion may require that smaller groups, such as women- or youth-only, are formed to capture input from those whose voices might not otherwise be heard. Second, consistent with adaptive management principles, the Activity will continually gather formal and informal feedback on inclusion practices and results and track the progress and success for all interventions to ensure effective inclusion and empowerment of the poorest and traditionally marginalized sub-populations.

Sustainability and exit strategy. Amalima Loko will foster communities’ capacity in collective planning, using available resources to strengthen resilience and improve watershed management. The Activity will also reinforce linkages to GOZ staff and strengthen their ability to adequately support communities’ collective planning processes. The Activity will support Amalima Committees to review and update the community plans annually with GOZ technical staff increasingly leading that support over Years 2 and 3. By year 4 Amalima Loko staff will use a lighter touch and Amalima Committees, with GOZ support, will lead the review process. Amalima Committees will directly strengthen and improve the inclusiveness and representativeness of government-mandated processes and committees, such as DRR Committees. Whether or not Amalima Committees continue to operate post-Activity, their skills in leadership and community participatory planning, strengthened linkages with GOZ staff, and enhanced ability to provide support to communities for planning purposes will be sustained.

### Purpose 2: Health and Availability of Soil, Water, and Plant Resources within the Watershed Improved

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| **Purpose 2: Expected High-Level Results** |
| 588 community representatives actively participate in 21 Watershed Cluster Steering Groups for planning and action |
| 28,520 households and 131,889 individuals have improved access to water for agriculture and productive use |
| 95% of farmers apply the accessing supported extension services and inputs |

Approach. The Amalima Loko evidence-driven Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) approach for watershed management complements and supports the people-centered Community Visioning process described under Purpose 1. Dabane’s well-established IWRM mobilizes land-users and other government and community stakeholders in participatory mapping of socio-ecological aspects of micro catchments combining local indigenous knowledge with scientific techniques (such as remote sensing and GIS). Once resource needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities have been mapped and appraised, Dabane trains and mentors management committees to develop and implement micro-catchment management plans. Through Amalima Loko, Dabane will integrate this process into the community visioning exercise working alongside the community visioning and agriculture teams to develop a holistic visioning, governance and management development process. IWRM depends on extensive local participation and considers social equity, economic efficiency, and environmental sustainability in equal measure. Implementation of the IWRM approach integrates the skills and experience of the various Amalima Loko team members, bringing together Dabane’s technical expertise with community mobilization from ORAP, the CATALYSE community visioning methodology from Mercy Corps, SBC strategies from The Manoff Group, and management and integration from CNFA.

Sub-Purpose 2.1 focuses on introducing the IWRM approach to ensure soil and water resources are restored using a sustainable and holistic landscape approach. Amalima Committees, DRR Committees, FFSs, and producer and livestock groups will be sensitized to watershed concepts and IWRM principles and trained to understand micro-catchment system functionality.

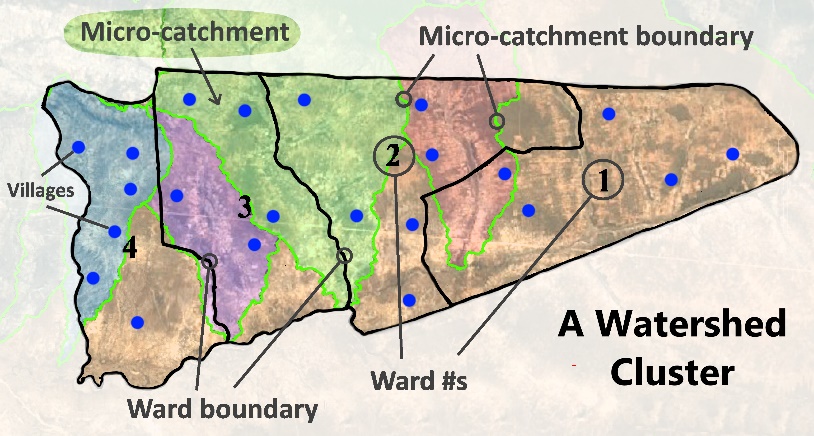
Amalima Loko will take an integrated approach to all project activities, based on the inherent social contract between the project team, the communities, and local authorities. In each micro-catchment, the processes of resource appraisal, planning and implementation of improved land management, resource conservation and livelihoods activities are integrated in the Amalima Loko process with community visioning experts working alongside the IWRM experts, agriculture experts, and health experts to provide a holistic, participatory community support approach. Since micro-catchments are naturally defined and will often involve residents and stakeholders from more than one ward, Watershed Cluster Steering Groups of male and female stakeholders will be formed to lead the development of a cluster-level Watershed Management Plan that will map and delineate micro-catchments in each cluster and identify appropriate water infrastructure, conservation works, and other complementary land and water use strategies. Once completed, watershed infrastructure and conservation works lay the groundwork for improved agricultural productivity and diversity and improved livestock management. Sub-Purpose 2.2 will provide additional interventions to take advantage of the improved NRM base and modify land use practices to ensure sustainable use for years to come.

Amalima Loko will be implemented using a phased approach with two clusters, beginning with upstream locations in the first cluster and downstream in the second cluster. All initiatives in the watersheds will comprise rainfall-to-soil infiltration systems to increase crop yields, improve rangeland, and conserve soil and the environment generally. This strategy will continue down the watershed in as many arable lands and grazing areas as possible to provide a cumulative benefit. Reaching riparian (vleis, wetlands) and riverine areas with rainfall runoff control systems will be developed to increase water availability and to get water into the soil and subsoil.

In the upstream river channel water harvesting structures such as sand dams, subsurface dams or weirs will be constructed dependent on the geology and topography, the soils and locally available construction materials. Downstream areas are more likely to provide opportunities for sand-abstraction, more productive boreholes and earth embankment dams, as well as the foregoing, again dependent on the geology and topography, the soils and locally available construction materials. Selection of proposed interventions and sites will require critical surveying and assessment. This will be particularly important in areas where the soil is aeolian sand, which is highly porous, unstable and cannot be compacted. In these areas concrete structures are difficult and expensive due to lack of coarse sand and rock for construction purposes. Many areas are sodic soil (alkali with high pH levels) making earth embankment dams impossible and are likely to be washed away with the first rains.

#### Sub-purpose 2.1. Improved community ownership of watershed resource governance

###### IO 2.1.1. Improved mechanisms for stakeholder communication and coordination

Zimbabwean watershed governance entities have adequate technical capacity but lack resources to reach beyond the sub-catchment level.[[64]](#endnote-65) As a result, they have little direct influence on planning or practices on the ground and communities have little engagement with officials for planning and decision making. There is also a lack of an evidence-based planning and inclusive management framework that uses modern techniques such as GIS and remote sensing combined with local knowledge and expertise. In accordance with the ToC, Amalima Loko will bring together specialists from relevant government institutions with community representatives at the Watershed Cluster level to coordinate management of land and water resources, as a precondition to improving the availability and quality of water for human lives and livelihoods. Along with adoption of improved land use practices, this will lead to improved watershed management across the region.

##### FIGURE 1-11: WATERSHED CLUSTERS ACROSS WARDS AND VILLAGES

Intervention 2.1.1.1. Engage stakeholders on cluster approach for watershed governance.In the third quarter of FY21, the Amalima Loko Watershed Field Officer and Technical Coordinators will convene a Watershed Cluster Steering Group for each cluster, bringing together technical stakeholders, including Sub-Catchment-level ZINWA officers, representatives from District Forestry, Irrigation, AGRITEX and EMA, and community members from each ward-level Amalima Committee in the cluster, including DRR Committee members. Gender and youth quotas will help ensure adequate representation of these sub-populations. The group will review GIS maps of the cluster produced by Amalima Loko in consultation with ZINWA, identify watercourses, features, and terrain; vegetation; and soil features and land use areas. They will identify and apply local river names to micro-catchments in the cluster and identify and agree on constituent villages in each named micro-catchment. This process will help community representatives understand the breadth and complexity of natural watersheds and demonstrate that micro-catchments cannot be managed at the ward level alone but require cooperative management with all wards the micro-catchment covers. The Watershed Cluster Steering Group will be a formal working group for stakeholder engagement and accountability for watershed issues, including individual, community, commercial resource exploitation. ZINWA has endorsed the Watershed Cluster approach as an appropriate platform for it to engage at the community level, see Annex 15 for their letter of support.

Intervention 2.1.1.2. Collect and verify micro-catchment-level data. As part of the Community Visioning Preparation and Planning stage (Intervention 1.1.1.1), Amalima Committee representatives from the Watershed Cluster Steering Group will present and discuss with each village in their ward the GIS-generated maps for their cluster, with micro-catchments and constituent villages identified. To verify these maps, the Activity will recruit youth to operate digital tablets loaded with GIS and mapping software to collect GPS coordinates and photos of critical areas of runoff, erosion, degradation, water bodies and water points in the micro-catchment where they reside. These youth will be mentored by an older community representative with greater knowledge of the local landscape. Verification will involve transect walks, physical observation, and GPS mapping of selected land classes. Young women will be paired to ensure their safety during the physical assessments. Amalima Loko will engage these Youth Mapping Technicians as temporary contract workers and will train them to identify areas in each micro-catchment that require urgent attention and to monitor and record areas of commercial resource exploitation. The tablets will provide real- time information that can be transmitted to the GIS and Remote Sensing Specialist at Dabane for analysis. Providing this responsibility to young men and women serves the multiple purposes of demonstrating that youth can make valuable contributions to their community, providing paid opportunities, enhancing transferrable skills, and instilling appreciation for natural resources and the knowledge of elders. After the project has ended, Mapping Technicians can continue to update information to the maps through Sub-Catchment Councils.

Verified maps will inform the Participatory Capacity Vulnerability Assessment (PCVA) by Watershed Cluster Steering Groups. As its name suggests, the PCVA will identify hazards, shocks, and stresses, assess resilience capacities (social, ecological, and economic capital), and analyze their impacts on livelihoods and community resources. By understanding the larger watershed issues and context and developing a more detailed understanding of local risks, DRR Committees will be better able to use a landscape planning approach in developing DRR Plans (see Intervention 1.2.3.2). These improved and contextualized ward-level DRR Plans will in turn strengthen district DRR Plans.

Intervention 2.1.1.3 Establish and train Asset Management Committees. Amalima Loko will develop watershed infrastructure assets as described in IO 2.2.1. The Activity will facilitate the establishment of Asset Manangement Committees (AMC) to manage and maintain each asset. AMCs will be formed during the watershed asset planning stage to ensure their involvement from the start. AMCs generally comprise a chair, vice chair, treasurer, secretary, vice secretary and two committee members. Depending on the asset there may be subcommittees, such as a marketing subcommittee for an irrigation scheme. Watershed Field Officers will train AMCs on topics such as good governance; use, operation, maintenance, and fundraising; and managing funds to ensure maintenance, cleaning, and repair. For sustainable, continued use of the asset there will be a strong focus on adequate training, follow-up and refresher training. Traditional and elected leaders will receive training to strengthen their roles and responsibilities with regard to monitoring asset management. DDF Staff will train and equip local pump minders and mechanics to take care of boreholes and provide support to communities if a breakdown occurs.[[65]](#endnote-66) Users will be trained to operate and maintain assets and receive manuals. Farmers, AGRITEX officers, and AMCs will be trained and mentored in effective use of new and unfamiliar technologies. Gender and vulnerability mainstreaming will occur through training of AMCs to ensure the needs and voices of different users (women, men, boys, girls, elderly, disabled, etc.) are considered in asset design and management. AMC members will be encouraged to participate in other interventions (such as VS&L and IGAs) and trained to establish or strengthen mechanisms to collect user fees and manage asset user funds for spare parts or repairs. The Activity will link AMCs with service providers for technical back-up and spare parts.

###### IO 2.1.2. Improved watershed management plans and policies

Currently watershed governance planning and policy making does not effectively engage communities or local resource users as stakeholders in the process. Watershed plans often do not reflect local priorities and realities and therefore communities and local authorities lack motivation to follow through on watershed management activities. Based on the most limiting factors to improve watershed maangement plans and policies identified in the TOC, interventions in IO2.1.2 will increase community stakeholders’ awareness of natural resources and ownership of watershed management planning processes, improve government priorization for watershed mangement, and improve accountability for appropriate NRM practices.

Intervention 2.1.2.1. Develop Watershed Management Plans. On completion of micro-catchment mapping and the PCVA, Watershed Cluster Steering Groups will reconvene, with Amalima Committee members presenting the findings on the state of the micro-catchments in their wards to the group. The Watershed Cluster Steering Group will identify and prioritize watershed management activities, including repair of degraded areas, conservation works, water harvesting, wetland management, recommended soil and water management, grazing, and agroforestry practices. They will also prioritize and endorse water assets and conservation works to be implemented at the micro-catchment level. The Watershed Cluster Steering Group will own and monitor the plans, while Amalima Committees will oversee implementation of specific local activities. Amalima Loko Watershed Field Officers will work with Amalima Committees to ensure that the 21 Watershed Management Plans are synchronized with and inform their corresponding Ward Transformation and DRR plans. This will be an annual process, with plans reviewed and updated each year after the harvest. Intensive monitoring to understand barriers to and motivations for participating in this planning and participating in watershed activities over time will inform improved training and SBC approaches as part of the learning agenda over the life of the Activity.

#### Sub-purpose 2.2. Improved Use of Watershed Resources for Lives and Livelihoods

###### IO 2.2.1. Improved watershed infrastructure

Amalima: Watershed Infrastructure

Amalima constructed or rehabilitated:

* 48 dams that benefit 60,000 livestock
* 46 dip tanks that benefit 70,000 livestock
* 63 sand abstraction systems for garden water for 1,260 farmers
* 19 solar-powered irrigation schemes serving 1,197 farmers
* 10 solarized high-yielding boreholes for livestock watering and domestic use serving 7,500 livestock and 2,500 households

Constructing watershed infrastructure and installing conservation works (jointly referred to as “assets”) is a foundational outcome that will support improved soil and water management for agriculture, improved grazing area management, and resilience to droughts and floods. Amalima Loko will expand on Amalima watershed infrastructure activities (see box and Annex 24, Watershed Infrastructure, for asset photos for examples), prioritizing specific hazards or specific development outcomes, such as:

* Rehabilitation of degraded areas and revegetation with appropriate indigenous plants.
* Construction of soil conservation and erosion prevention works, including gully reclamation, gabions, silt traps, stone bunds, live/green conservation works, and agroforestry, with emphasis on soil improvement and production of fodder species.
* Construction or rehabilitation of water conservation and harvesting structures, including surface dams, sand dams (masonry structures that accumulate coarse river sand for water storage in seasonal riverbeds), sub-surface dams (impermeable barriers in existing sand riverbeds that trap water in the sand).

Rehabilitation or installation of boreholes for domestic and livestock use, and installation of community water sources for agriculture and/or irrigation systems.

Intervention 2.2.1.1. Construct and rehabilitate water infrastructure and conservation works. Based on the priorities outlined in their Ward Transformation Plans and further analyzed in Watershed Management Plans, Amalima Loko will conduct studies and site assessments to assess feasibility, environmental impact, sustainability, appropriate methods for asset development, and costs. As needed, environmental impact studies will be conducted in accordance with USAID and GOZ requirements, and highly sensitive or fragile habitats will be avoided. Amalima Loko specialists will use existing groundwater maps, physical and geological surveys, and maps from the EMA indicating the habitats of endangered or threatened species. As required for select assets, comprehensive technical reports, Environmental Monitoring and Management Plans, and Bills of Quantities will be developed.

Next, based on the outcome of these studies, the Watershed Cluster Steering Group will make a final determination on whether to proceed with the construction of particular assets based on the number of people and livestock to benefit; cost of construction or rehabilitation of the asset, sufficient community cohesion to manage it, and appropriateness of the technology relative to community capacity and cohesion (particularly for irrigation technology). Then Amalima Loko engineers will develop engineering plans for construction of the asset and obtain technical approval from Catchment Councils or other GOZ authorities. All construction will be supervised onsite by Activity, Rural District Council, or subcontractor engineers. For more specialized tasks and mechanized earthworks, local specialists will be contracted to ensure knowledge and skills transfer to the community. Upon completion of asset construction, opening ceremonies will reinforce a sense of community ownership.

Unskilled labor for the construction of infrastructure and conservation works will be arranged through a CFA modality. CFA participation will be based on processes used by Amalima and following GOZ operational guidelines. Following planning and assessment, Field Officers will mobilize and manage laborers. Each construction project provides different types of jobs; generally, physical and time demands vary to encourage workers of both sexes to participate. We expect well over 60 percent female participation, based on achievements from Amalima (74% women and 35% youth), as we will continue to provide onsite childcare, breaks for breastfeeding, and place women in positions where they manage schedules – all of which encourage and facilitate female participation. All payments will be based on the Attendance Register, made by cash-in-transit or mobile money transfers where feasible.

Amalima Loko construction activities will comply with all relevant USAID and GOZ environmental and construction regulations; Annex 8, Environmental Safeguards Plan, provides further information on environmental analysis and compliance for infrastructure and conservation works construction. Per ADS 303maw, USAID Implementation of Construction Activities, construction costs at a single project site will be less than $500,000, and the total cost for construction activities under the award will be less than $10 million. All construction activities are clearly defined in the project budget and will be approved by the AO per Mandatory Standard Provision 22, Limiting Construction Activities. To assist with management of construction activities, Zimbabwean legal requirements (i.e., permitting), and environmental compliance, the Activity will employ two compliance specialists based in Lupane and Hwange and an Environmental Specialist in Bulawayo.

Intervention 2.2.1.2. Construct new water points. Zimbabwe clearly defines national processes and roles for new borehole drilling. The mapping described under Purpose 1 will verify where new boreholes are needed (see Annex 22). Feasibility studies include assessments of water demand for domestic use, crops, livestock, and business, as well as quantities available, water recharge rates, and sustainable extraction rates. Activity staff will oversee a hydrological groundwater survey and hire a drilling contractor to drill the holes; they will conduct regular water quality testing – a role that MOHCC will take over once initial testing is complete and the borehole is cleared for safe drinking water. MOHCC regularly monitors all boreholes in the country for disease. Boreholes will have AMCs similar to those described above. The DDF will be leveraged for training, repairs, and equipment to maintain the boreholes. The Activity will support 150 new and rehabilitated boreholes.

###### IO 2.2.2. Improved natural resource conservation and use practices

Amalima Loko will promote the improvement of watershed health and sustainability by minimizing the harmful impacts of agriculture land use such as soil erosion due to runoff, overgrazing, and streambank cultivation and by proactively improving water absorption and soil stability by encouraging and supporting communities to complete conservation works, promoting improved agricultural practices, and reducing harmful natural resource exploitation practices. Adopting climate-smart and conservation agriculture practices is a critical pathway along the ToC to sustainably increase productivity and food security; improved practices are also critical to support household and community resilience. Because Kalahari sands, which cover much of the area, have poor water and fertility retention, the Activity will promote methods that increase soil organic matter to make use of inputs and irrigation more effectively. Improved soil is necessary precondition to improve the watershed and support the productivity of crops and livestock to enhance food security. These practices will conserve and harvest water and are sustainable from both the environment and smallholder economic perspectives. (See Annex 17, PEA.) To encourage adoption of these improved agricultural practices, Amalima Loko will utilize the proven Farmer Field School (FFS) approach and livestock management training to reach female and male farmers with SBC approaches around use of improved practices and technologies.

While Zimbabwe has a competent and gender-balanced agricultural and livestock extension service, our ToC reflects a need for complementary extension services to expand their reach as a critical element along the pathway to food security. This IO therefore establishes an additional and complementary extension and behavior change agent model, the Village Agriculture Coordinator (VAC), and supports an existing one – paravets. We introduced the VAC model with great success under Amalima (see text box), and government extension services support its expansion because it makes them more effective. Private input suppliers will pay VACs will on a commission-basis direct services rendered. While providing last-mile extension, the VAC model is also designed to provide critical linkages to private sector input and output markets (IO 3.1.3). Matabeleland North is already familiar with and eager to expand the model throughout the province (Annex 15, LOCs). Although Amalima Loko will oversee expansion of the model, we expect provincial leadership to take ownership over time, as it is analogous to the VHW model supported by MOHCC.

Amalima: Innovative SBC in Agriculture

FANTA’s 2018 *Review of SBC Methods and Approaches within Food for Peace Development Food Security Activities* notes, “Amalima’s Village Agriculture Coordinator is a behavior change agent explicitly invested to work as a peer educator who goes beyond demonstrating recommended practices and helps farmers work through barriers to adopting new practices. It is a pioneering role – the first of its kind in agriculture in Zimbabwe, and perhaps unique across DFSAs. It is a model for FFP to study and develop as a way to bring more SBC best practices into the process of supporting new agricultural techniques.”

Intervention 2.2.2.1. Identify and train Village Agriculture Coordinators.Amalima Loko will introduce the successful VAC concept to the AGRITEX and DVS officers who are not already familiar with it. As part of the Community Visioning process, AGRITEX, DVS, and Field Officers will identify and recruit male and female Lead Farmers or Master Farmers[[66]](#endnote-67) in each village who are interested in serving as VACs. At the end of Year 1, CNFA will identify and recruit 435 Lead or Master Farmers – one per village to train as VACs and start working and experimenting with potential input supply models. We will also use this small group for the trials of potentially effective SBC messages that will emerge from the formative research. Selection criteria include demonstrated motivation and commitment, agricultural competence, knowledge of climate-smart and environmentally friendly practices, demonstrated training skills, good communication, and past or potential future participation in AGRITEX Master Farmer training.

VACs present opportunities to strengthen links among agriculture, livelihoods, and nutrition at the household level, identify barriers to behavior change across these domains, and provide a sustainable market linkage. The VAC’s primary responsibility will be to influence adoption of good agricultural practices and link farmers to input and output markets. They will also support Ward Transformation Plan and Watershed Management Plan goals regarding to agriculture and land use (gardens, small grains, etc.). Because VACs are in daily contact with farmers, they are in a unique position to offer other value-added farm services such as input provision, seed multiplication and sales, aggregation, equipment rental or sales, or transportation. This will generate income for VACs while bringing critically needed services to help farmers meet productivity goals. These income-generating opportunities make the VAC model especially attractive to youth, who seek new economic activities and income streams. Currently, the VAC is an informal support mechanism outside the formal government AGRITEX structure. The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, and Rural Resettlement is interested in formalizing the approach under its structure. We will work with the ministry to promote VACs at the district and ward levels, improve use and recognition of VACs, and provide support.

Amalima Loko Agriculture Field Agents and AGRITEX will train VACs as effective community-level change agents, prioritizing improved practices, using supporting materials like job aids and reminder materials, and leading skills demonstrations, farm visits, and one-on-one and group guidance. The VAC training protocol includes a two-day training upon selection and quarterly refresher training focused on seasonal updates, sustainable watershed concepts, financial literacy, business skills, sharing lessons learned on response strategies, communication, and training skills and methods.

Intervention 2.2.2.2. Identify and train and equip paravets.Paravets are a well-established, clinical fee-for-service extension model. They are licensed and operate under the auspices of the DVS, providing a wide range of treatments and vaccinations for all types of livestock. Amalima Loko will identify paravets in coordination with DVS and map their coverage areas through the Community Visioning process. Where there are coverage gaps or paravets are nearing retirement, Amalima Loko will facilitate training and certification of new paravets by DVS officials. For new and current paravets, Amalima Loko will provide equipment as needed, including technical tools and bicycles to expand coverage. The Activity will coordinate with DVS and paravets to promote improved business planning for sustainability, with an updated fee structure to cover their costs and provide a decent income. CNFA has used this successful and sustainable approach in Burkina Faso and Niger as well as Zimbabwe.

Intervention 2.2.2.3. Pilot community-based seed and seedling multiplication models. Access to seed is a major constraint to diversifying and optimizing productivity, and planting is always delayed due to the lack of planting material. Amalima Loko will pilot community-based seed multiplication models in wards that prioritize this in Ward Transformation Plans. Previous models have distributed or passed on seeds at no cost, distorting private sector seed markets and blocking the emergence of a private sector seed system. Amalima Loko will pilot different nutrition-sensitive and market-based options (per the PEA) to ensure seed multiplication enterprises can be profitable and sustainable, and access foundation seeds from ICRISAT or private suppliers (see Annex 15 for the LOC). The focus will be customized to the community, but may include seeds for improved and/or biofortified legumes (cowpeas), groundnuts, small grains (SV2 and Macia sorghum and PMV1 and PMV2 pearl millet), fortified maize, and commonly consumed vegetables (e.g., tomatoes, rape, onions, cabbage, and kale). The Activity will also pilot the propagation of orange-fleshed sweet potato planting material. As possible, seed and seedlings for early-maturing and drought-resistant crops and trees, dietary diversification, and climate resiliency, will be prioritized.

Intervention 2.2.2.4. Input aggregation and input fairs. Amalima Loko will promote aggregation and sales of inputs by VACs and through input fairs, including Amalima Days. The goal will be to ensure smallholders in the target areas have market-based access to seed, crop protection products, stock feed, veterinary medications, and other inputs that can foster climate-smart agriculture and support labor saving, especially for women. Continuing Amalima’s successful approach, VACs, with project staff, AGRITEX, and paravets, will help producers place bulk orders with an input supplier. This approach will facilitate discounts, improved transportation, or delivery arrangements and generate commissions for the aggregator. Input suppliers and agrodealers will be encouraged to attend input fairs to bring inputs closer to farmers and reduce transactional risks and costs. Input suppliers are more willing to participate in one-day input fairs than enter into formal business relationships and extend credit to rural agrodealers, who are seen as high-risk clients. Therefore, Amalima Loko will coordinate with agrodealers and agricultural input suppliers (e.g., Agrifoods, Agriseeds, National Tested Seeds, National Foods, Klein Karoo Seed Marketing, Country Feeds, and Farm & City) to organize livestock and crops input fairs (see Annex 15, LOCs). In preparation for input fairs, agrodealers and VACs will raise awareness of events and mobilize communities to order from the input supplier. The supplier delivers the order and pays a pre-negotiated commission. This model builds trust between agrodealers and input suppliers. Amalima found that this initial agreement often evolved into formal arrangements, with agrodealers conducting business freely with input suppliers and independently organizing input fairs. The fairs also prioritize attendance by women, who frequent marketplaces more than men and have significant roles in rural production supply chains and urban markets.

Intervention 2.2.2.5. Identify and train Lead Farmers. The large distances between communities in the intervention area limits the availability of extension agents to support farmers. Amalima Loko will enage Lead Farmers from within communities to organize Farmer Field Schools that promote the adoption of proven practices and technologies such as mechanized conservation agriculture (CA), intercropping, and crop rotations. Farmer field schools are offered within communities, which makes them more accessible to women, youth, and other participants with limited mobility, than formal trainings offered directly by AGRITEX. FFSs use hands-on demonstration and experiential learning that are more suitable to rural women and youth farmers than formal, structured training. These locally driven solutions allow for group members to determine their meeting times, ensuring that sessions can be planned for times that fit women’s schedules and do not conflict with other household obligations. Amalima Loko will provide extension officers from government departments (AGRITEX, EMA, and DVS) and previously trained Lead Farmers a refresher training-of-trainers to enable them to sustainably implement and oversee the FFS approach. The training will include managing participatory, discovery-based learning, technical knowledge to guide the groups’ learning and action process, and build effective behavior change messaging into training. Extension officers will be paired with and train 2,225 Lead Farmers at the village level to conduct FFS. In our experience, more female than male Lead Farmers come forward for training; we expect a similar trend during Amalima Loko. Training materials will be translated into local languages and field tested to ensure that they are at a comprehension level that is appropriate for women and youth.

Intervention 2.2.2.6 Update training ***materials.*** As noted in the Amalima Final Evaluation Report and 2018 FANTA SBC report, Amalima developed extensive, high-quality training materials for FFS and livestock management that are ready to use (see text box for the benefits of the FFS model). Annex 24 provides an overview of training materials and a sample FFS training module. Within the first year, Amalima Loko will update the training materials for Tonga and Nambya speakers. Upon finalization of the behavioral, market, and economic research conducted in the Refinement period, supplementary or modified training materials will be developed in the Year 2. These may need to reflect contextualized environmental and livelihood conditions – for example, including local nutrient-dense, resilient crops and livestock management practices – and will likely include specialized subject matter such as fishing, fodder production, and apiculture.

Benefits of The Farmer Field School Model

* Utilizes and strengthens government extension agents
* Farmer-centered – driven by farmer needs
* Emphasizes multiple dimensions of agro-ecological and socio-cultural systems
* Cost-effective
* Designed for low literacy groups
* Supports social cohesion via group learning
* Flexible and responsive to specific contexts and shocks
* Encourages innovation and experimentation

Intervention 2.2.2.7 Form FFS training groups and conduct farmer training. Although the FFS approach has been introduced in the Amalima Loko intervention areas by other NGOs, full coverage is lacking, and it has been applied inconsistently. Amalima Loko will strengthen existing FFS groups and Lead Farmers where they exist and form new FFS groups where they are lacking. Leading into the October 2021 production season, Lead Farmers will institute a process of self-selecting group members with a common interest to form FFS groups in their village. Approximately 2,225 FFS will be formed over the life of Activity. Groups may be mixed or single sex depending on the district culture and type of livestock or crop. During the season, facilitators will introduce and encourage participation in other income-generating or asset management activities in their village or ward, or CAGs such as VS&L or AMCs that they can join to sustain and support the practices beyond FFS training. Farmers in FFS groups will be trained in groups of 15 to 25 farmers in a village once weekly, focusing on one crop or livestock type for the season or practice suited to the calendar. As the training follows the season, farmers will engage in a practical group exercise and apply what they have learned at home. At the end of the season, the farmers would have experienced the full production cycle. Some topics to be covered depend on the type of crop, livestock, and technology; they may include soil husbandry: minimum tillage conservation agriculture: water harvesting and water moisture management in rain-fed systems: livestock nutrition; integrated pest management; wildlife management; selection and breeding; fodder production and enhancement; selective marketing; livestock management in drought conditions; invasive plant species control and management; veld carrying capacities; and grazing cycles.

The Activity will facilitate updates to training materials, contextualizing the trainings to the area based on soil, slope, rainfall patterns, common shocks, and other factors. The training materials will incorporate gender issues (see text box) and promote key aspects of climate-smart and conservation agriculture that are useful and accepted by farmers, such as intercropping with legumes to fix nitrogen and cover soil, agroforestry for fodder and fuel, and increasing yields on smaller areas while reclaimfing degraded areas. FFS training will include preparing for and responding to frequent shocks such as pests and diseases, erratic precipitation, and wildlife threats, and will test and build in localized solutions. Overreliance on maize is detrimental to soil and water, so Amalima Loko will promote a holistic approach to field crops. Healthy Harvest training (Intervention 3.2.3.2), which covers importance of crop diversity will also be incorporated into FFS training. Diversification away from maize is justified in the PEA.

Amalima: Engaging Women Farmers

A female farmer in Gwanda said, “I benefited a lot from the agriculture trainings, mostly to learn to have drought-tolerant crops to deal with the dryness – better products all around in terms of agriculture. I thank Amalima for all they have given us. We have been learning more how to help ourselves and I am very happy for this.”

Intervention 2.2.2.8 Livestock management training and improved practices. Livestock management training seeks to decrease losses and improve livestock productivity by building farmers’ capacity in disease management, nutrition, and breed improvement. Per the PEA, Amalima Loko will provide livestock management training with greater focus on goats and improved – not indigenous – poultry (more traditionally owned and tended by women), and cattle. Given the constraints women and youth face, Amalima Loko will emphasize recruiting women and youth for these activities, and will use analysis from SBC and Community Visioning exercises to tailor training materials and processes to target their specific needs. Amalima’s livestock management training materials will be the basis of the training program; however, inputs from the GOZ Climate-Smart Agriculture Framework and the Climate Risk Management Assessment (see Annex 8, Evironmental Safeguards Plan), as well as lessons learned from formative research on livestock usage and market opportunities, will be used to tailor recommendations and messaging in the materials. Annex 24 provides an overview of Amalima livestock training materials. Livestock management training will be delivered through a range of CAGs based on the existing structures and priorities identified in the Community Visioning process. Since most farmers produce both crops and livestock, the training will be broadly relevant for FFS and VS&L groups. Livestock training will be provided by AGRITEX with the DVS and will promote the benefits of supplementary feeding, focusing on proven behavior change messages.

Amalima Loko livestock management training will promote the harvest of locally available feed products and purchase of stock feed. To increase access to stock feed, especially for poultry, Amalima Loko will facilitate input fairs at times when stock feed is needed and by building village capacity and market linkages to aggregate orders. The Activity will promote fodder production focused on soil-enhancing legumes such as lablab, velvet beans, cowpeas and Leucaena as supplementary feed for livestock. These legumes do well in the target areas and can be fed fresh, dried for hay, or processed for silage. Amalima Loko will also promote the harvest, processing, and storage of crop stovers and locally available forest products like acacia pods (especially for goats) and marula fruit. The Activity will also promote treatment of fodder with salt and molasses to improve palatability and nutritive value.

Livestock management training promotes breed improvement to enhance livestock productivity by encouraging desired traits such as higher body mass, more prolific reproduction, and reduced time to maturation. Breed improvement requires the introduction of new breeding stock to avoid inbreeding, purchasing or paying for the services of a sire with desired characteristics, or artificial insemination for cattle and goats. Amalima Loko will support farmers in pursuing breed improvement to generate income through the IGA and interventions (3.1.3.3 and 3.1.2.3) and coordination with AGRITEX, DVS, and private sector actors. For example, improving a goat breed by purchasing an improved breed buck was a common IGA for groups under Amalima.

Intervention 2.2.2.9 Facilitating more sustainable grazing land management. In addition to improving farm-level crop and livestock production practices, Amalima Loko will promote improved land use planning and governance of communal grazing land. By improving grazing land management, Amalima Loko will minimize the negative impacts of livestock on the land and capitalize on a clear economic opportunity to incorporate livestock into a system of regenerative land use – a virtuous cycle of healthy communal grazing lands and healthy productive livestock. Current grazing land use and carrying capacity will be examined as part of the agricultural assessment. Amalima Loko will build the capacity of traditional leaders and local authorities—such as government extension staff, EMA, AGRITEX, Veterinary Deptartment, and paravets—to formulate and implement rangeland management by-laws. The Activity will facilitate the establishment of rangeland management committees and train them to control grazing and ensure rangeland recovery. These plans will integrate successful approaches to sustainable grazing land management in Zimbabwe such as establishing relief grazing areas, planting beneficial cover crops and shrubs as fodder, and establishing rotational grazing plans. The Activity will mobilize resources to support grazing land rehabilitation through CFA and by providing in-kind materials and supporting communities to incorporate best practices into their DRR and Watershed Management Plans. Amalima Loko staff will also support DRR Committees, Watershed Cluster Steering Groups, and community members more broadly to understand the importance of land planning for communal grazing and will develop strategies to address issues such as overgrazing, high concentrations of invasive species, erosion, and gullies. This intervention will support activities such as household fodder production, improving the quality of grazelands through controlled grazing and planting legumes during rest periods, forage harvesting and quality improvement, promotion of livestock feed for supplemental feeding.

Intervention 2.2.2.10 Installation of irrigated community gardens.Where villages have access to land suitable for irrigation and water, and where they have prioritized the production of more diverse and nutrient dense-food through community gardens in their Ward Transformation Plans and Watershed Management Plans, Amalima Loko will support groups to establish irrigated community gardens to produce consistent supplies of diverse fruits and vegetables for household consumption and local market sales. Community gardens are large plots subdivided for use by several households. The benefits of community gardens for resource-constrained households include joint access to water, labor, and inputs. Amalima saw that community gardens are more successful when social cohesion in the village or group is high, so all gardens will be planted and tended in collaboration with VS&L groups (Intervention 3.2.3.1). Selection of sites for gardens will require groups to demonstrate capacity, cohesion, and a method for financial sustainability. The linkage to VS&L groups will also ensure households have sustainable resources to manage their gardens. The plots will cover areas of less than three hectares, and the groups will be able to access in-kind and cost-shared grants to obtain irrigation equipment and supplies. Training will focus on production practices, water conservation methods, increasing soil organic matter, maintaining and replacing irrigation equipment, micro-dosing of fertilizers and manure, and avoiding overwatering, which causes fertility loss due to leaching.

Gender, youth, and social inclusion. In Amalima’s experience, women and youth enthusiastically take on paid CFA/construction work. Amalima Loko will facilitate women’s participation in CFA activities by providing onsite childcare (by paid caregiver) and breaks for breastfeeding. The Activity will maintain a spirit of inclusion and set quotas for women and youth in membership and leadership of asset management, planning, and action groups. Youth will be recruited to support program mapping, enabling them to learn transferable skills while gaining appreciation for natural resource conservation. This is particularly important as we encourage increased production of nutrient-dense foods, which tend to be under the domain of women. In supporting income-generation and leadership opportunities, the Activity will empower women and youth – and village members – to appreciate and be proud of their roles in community development.

Sustainability and exit strategy. GOZ staff (ZINWA, DRR, AGRITEX, Forestry, etc.) will be deeply involved in training and supporting Watershed Cluster Steering Groups to develop initial Watershed Management Plans. GOZ staff will gradually assume support for annual plan reviews and updates, mentored by Amalima Loko staff. Plans will feed into the Sub-Catchment Plan managed by ZINWA and inform DRR Plans managed by wards. Amalima Loko will work with ZINWA to develop formal links between Watershed Cluster Steering Groups and ZINWA. We will ensure the sustainability of watershed assets constructed through Amalima Loko via rigorous planning and oversight to reduce environmental impacts and ensure community engagement and ownership. AMCs, formed prior to construction, will consider environmental concerns and plan for needed resources and how to obtain (user fees, community labor, etc.) and manage them. Quality extension services and access to inputs will be sustained through community groups (FFS, VS&L) and paid and unpaid service providers (paravets, VACs, Lead Farmers), linked to appropriate GOZ extension service providers. Where service providers are not yet part of the formal extension system (e.g., VACs), Amalima Loko will continue discussions that began under Amalima about integrating them into formal systems.

Amalima: Sustainable Input Supply

The Amalima Final Evaluation Report noted, “One major and lasting positive impact of the project has been to establish a widespread and largely self-sustaining input supply chain for most households through the strong working relationships of lead farmers, VACs and agrodealers.”

### **Purpose 3: Human Health and Livelihoods Improved**

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| Purpose 3: Expected High-Level Results |
| Prevalence of wasted children under five (0-59 months) reduced to 2% |
| Prevalence of stunted children under five (0-59 months) reduced to 18.4% |
| Prevalence of healthy weight children under five (0-59 months) increased to 95.7% |
| Prevalence of moderate to severe food insecurity in the household, based on the FIES reduced to 32% |
| Prevalence of underweight women of reproductive age reduced to 9.5% |
| Percent of women of reproductive age consuming a diet of minimum diversity increased to 45% |

Approach. Purpose 3 prioritizes human health and livelihoods to address key limiting factors for food security and resilience. Good health, a sufficient and stable asset base, and adequate and reliable income are essential components of well-being and a reflection of effective adaptive and absorpative capacities. The logic pathway for Purpose 3, has improved adequacy and sustainability of natural resources (Purpose 2) and an improved enabiling environment (Purpose 1) as necessary preconditions for acieving Purpose 3 objectives. Purposes 1 and 2 address systemic challenges, while Purpose 3 prioritizes individual and household capacities to weather shocks and stresses and thrive.

While agriculture is the main livelihood in the province, it can be risky, so practicing diverse livelihood strategies results in increased income, savings and asset accumulation ultimately helps households to better manage the risk and impact of shocks and stresses. The PEA (Annex 17) finds that incremental benefits of vocational and entrepreneurship training largely surpass agriculture. Targeting youth with improved employment and entrepreneurship opportunities promotes their productive engagement and diversifies household earnings. Migration, a common and important income-generating and diversification strategy for households can contribute to adaptive and absorptive capacities – but households and communities must manage migration’s negative impacts.

A strong foundation of health and nutrition is crucial for an individual’s resilience capacity.[[67]](#endnote-68) Healthy and well-fed children withstand shocks and stresses better and grow into adults who can contribute to the economy,[[68]](#endnote-69) communities, and households. Preventing malnutrition among children is critical to break the cycle of vulnerability and ensure resilience over time.

#### Sub-purpose 3.1 Improved **sufficiency and reliability of household assets and income**

###### IO 3.1.1. Increased financial management capacity and tools

Improving financial services and skills is necessary pathway to improve the financial wellbeing of vulnerable households, a key component of resilience to shocks and stresses. Accomplishing this IO requires increased access to financial services, particularly VS&Ls, and financial literacy skill building. but they are extremely difficult to implement in Zimbabwe’s current economic context. For each of these pathways, Amalima Loko will focus on inclusion of women and the most vulnerable households – those least able to access financial services and effectively control and use their income.

Much of the focus in this IO is on VS&L, a proven approach with the potential for transformaitve impact. While VS&L loan sizes will not be sufficient on their own to capitalize all IGAs, VS&L is the most important tool through which Amalima Loko will help communities use their remittances and revenues from income-generating activities more effectively. Wherever possible Amalima Loko will assist communities to also access other sources of financing—through contract farming and formal micro-financing for short-term loans—for example. However, the team will exercise caution with these types of financing as it is extremely difficult for very poor and vulnerable households and communities to obtain and repay in Zimbabwe’s volatile financial environment.

Intervention 3.1.1.1. Provide financial literacy training. The Activity will use existing curricula and resources to target farmers, women, and youth to enhance financial literacy. Training will reach these groups through a larger package that includes training in FAAB (Intervention 3.1.3.2), VS&L (Intervention 3.1.1.2) and youth entrepreneurship (Intervention 3.1.2.2).

Intervention 3.1.1.2. Expand and enhance inclusivity, sustainability, and effectiveness of VS&L groups. With limited formal financial services available or accessible in the province, VS&L groups improve access to credit for routine household expenses like school fees and larger investments in productive assets or activities, and as an emergency safety net. VS&L promotes women’s economic empowerment (see text box). VS&L groups in Matabeleland are almost entirely female, but Amalima has seen men’s interest increase due to the demonstrated benefits of participation. VS&L is an effective tool for building and protecting household assets because it provides investment capital to make larger purchases and provides savings to help households avoid negative coping strategies, such as selling off productive assets, when facing shocks and stresses.

Amalima: VS&L Impact

The Amalima Final Evaluation Report found a significant increase in the use of financial services, from 5.4 to 24.5 percent in 2019, due to use of VS&Ls. The report notes that women’s lives have been transformed by the VS&Ls through more economic freedom and resilience; their improved ability to invest in productive activities; increased respect within their communities; and improved group dynamics and support for each other. With increasing regularity, men now either form their own groups or are willing to join a group with women.

Under Amalima, VS&L groups were the most effective and resilient mechanism for access to financial services and therefore are a prioritized focus area for Amalima Loko. The Activity will begin to support existing and form new groups in Phase I clusters during the Refinement period, beginning in February 2021. There are 504 registered VS&L groups in Matabeleland North, started by GOZ initiatives and donor-funded projects implemented by ORAP and others. CNFA will conduct review of the existing VS&L groups in the Amalima Loko operational areas to better understand the operating status of groups, particularly in light of COVID-19; funding levels and share out status; governance issues; and other challenges and opportunities. The findings of the assessment will be used to tailor VS&L support to existing groups and training materials and strategies for forming new groups.

Amalima Loko will strengthen or establish 1,087 more across 435 villages (assuming an average of 2.5 groups per village). The Activity will focus on expanding participation, increasing effectiveness, improving the inclusion of youth and the poor, and promoting integration of VS&L with other program activities to amplify impact.

Expand coverage. The Activity will establish new VS&L groups where there is interest and unmet demand and promote increased participation based on Ward Transformation Plans. Field Officers and community VS&L Facilitators will train new groups using Amalima training materials (see Annex 24) and drawing on local best practices. VS&L Facilitators, some of whom already function in this role, are community members who mentor their peers on the VS&L methodology. Amalima Loko will train additional facilitators as needed, including piloting Youth VS&L Facilitators to support youth groups. Amalima Loko will promote VS&L Facilitators’ visibility by providing job aids and bicycles for improved mobility as needed and will encourage sustainability by exploring fee-based support models and promoting linkages to the Ministry of Women Affairs and Development for ongoing support.

Enhance inclusivity. While participation in VS&L groups is voluntary and self-selected, the Activity will target youth and other vulnerable groups for participation. Amalima found that some sub-populations with fewer assets and less agency (youth, single mothers, and others) are often excluded or do not feel welcome in VS&L groups. Based on the Youth Savings and Loans Associations approach, the Activity will pilot youth-only VS&Ls that enable members to accumulate capital and obtain financial resources they can use to learn a trade or pursue economic activities.

Support VS&L social funds. Traditionally, VS&Ls in Zimbabwe included a social fund – a pool of money separate from the group’s rotating loan fund. This served as an emergency fund to support group members or members of the wider community who face shocks. In communities with VS&L participation and where multiple VS&Ls are active, social funds can be important safety nets for participants and support systems for the poorest and most vulnerable. Experience from Amalima and initial consultations with stakeholders in Matabeleland North suggest that social funds are no longer widespread. Amalima Loko will seek to re-invigorate VS&L social funds by promoting the practice in the Community Visioning process and VS&L training, and through financial support.

Intervention 3.1.1.3. Pilot financial support to VS&L groups. The ToC identified VS&Ls as a key strategy to address a range of issues including access to finance, economic opportunities for the poorest of the poor, social cohesion, and women’s empowerment. To catalyze VS&L scale-up and deepen their inclusivity and accessibility, Amalima Loko will pilot provision of VS&L seed funds with the dual purpose of enabling very poor and vulnerable households to join a group and increasing the group’s loan fund value. Funds would be provided to cover the buy-in and monthly contribution for a new VS&L participant for a finite period (six to 12 months). A bulk contribution would provide the group’s loan fund a cash infusion, enabling larger loans. In turn, larger loans enable recipients to scale up investments, further increasing income opportunities. The model is intended to incentivize VS&L groups to include more vulnerable members, benefiting both current and new members. The Activity will approach this concept as a pilot, as there are economic risks in overcapitalizing VS&L funds and social risks in providing direct subsidies for individual members. Various models to scale up VS&L may be explored and piloted during the Refinement period. Other potential models include a simple cash grant infusion to increase the group’s loan fund, as the USAID AgDiv program has done in Malawi, or seed funds to start new VS&L groups, especially youth-only groups.

###### IO 3.1.2. Increased diversified income streams

The ToC identifies diversifying income streams as a necessary precondition for improved sufficiency and reliability of household income, leading to and representing improved absorptive and adaptive capacity. Given Zimbabwe’s limited private sector development, widely dispersed population, and fragile natural resource base, economic opportunities are limited, and migration is common, especially among males of all ages. Amalima Loko will promote income diversification through entrepreneurship and development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), improved access to formal and informal job opportunities, and support for empowered migration as reflected in the ToC. While diversifying income is critical for all beneficiaries and sub-populations, there is special focus on youth and women, who face more limiting factors. Opportunities beyond agriculture production are particularly critical for youth, who seek alternatives to what they perceive as an undesirable life option.

Intervention 3.1.2.1. Conduct a participatory market assessment.In the Refinement period, Amalima Loko will conduct a market assessment that looks holistically at income-generating opportunities in the region, recognizing integrated income strategies that households and individuals use. The assessment will complement information from USAID’s January 2020 Matabeleland North Market Study[[69]](#endnote-70) and inform the Activity’s strategy for improved employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, increased agricultural earnings, and preparation for empowered migration. It will identify demand for technical and transferable skills for the local market and migrants as well as on- and off-farm opportunities for labor and entrepreneurship; describe constraints and opportunities in the wider market system for agricultural and fishing products and other local industries such as crafts; and note supporting services or functions that may help people find steady and decent work.[[70]](#endnote-71) The assessment will consider rural opportunities and those in regional hubs and will use a risk and resilience lens to understand differential vulnerabilities for entry into labor markets and how shocks and stressors affect labor options.

The market assessment will also seek to address gaps in current information about migration and remittances in Matabeleland North, recognizing both migration’s important role in the region and the challenging social and economic dynamics for migrants and the families and communities they leave behind. Surveys of migrants and their families will review communication and remittance practices, pre-travel arrangements made for household decision-making during migration periods, and how these play out during migration and after return. Amalima Loko will draw on the findings to refine the Activity’s strategy to promote empowered migration, ensuring migrants have the skills and support they need to be successful and households and communities can maximize the benefits of remittances. The focus will be on skills such as thinking ahead, negotiation, decision-making, financial literacy, and labor rights, and others. The market assessment will use a participatory, methodology, with consideration for the differentiated challenges and opportunities for sub-populations including youth, women, and labor-constrained households, which tend to be most vulnerable.

Intervention 3.1.2.2. Provide training and internships to create new income opportunities. Based on the market assessment, PEA, and priorities identified in the Community Visioning process, Amalima Loko will support training and internship opportunities for young people through training institutions such as Lupane State University, Don Bosco, and Silveira House and in partnership with the private sector. In the Refinement period, the Youth Entrepreneurship Coordinators will review prioritized opportunities to identify training institutions, review resources and approaches from prior youth development activities like Zimbabwe:Works, and develop curricula where gaps exist. Training support will be provided through scholarships to existing training programs; coordination with private sector actors and youth-focused NGOs such as Grassroots Soccer Zimbabwe; or direct training by Activity staff or consultants. Initial opportunities identified include: VAC and paravet services, input supply, threshing, fishing, fodder production and sales, food preparation, brick making, tailoring, carpentry, electronics, hair dressing, welding, brick laying, and threshing.

Amalima Loko will establish an internship program to complement classroom training with on-the-job technical skill building. Host firms will include mining and tourism sector enterprises; input suppliers; AGRITEX; DVS; agribusinesses such as Sondelani group and 10 Matabeleland Grain; fishing and fish trading companies in areas near the Zambezi; and local SMEs identified via the Community Visioning process (see Annex 15 LOCs). CNFA will formalize partnerships and sign memoranda of understanding that outline roles and responsibilities for hosts and entrepreneurs. Interns will receive monthly stipends during jobs to ensure the activity is accessible to those with limited resources, including women and youth.

Amalima Loko plans to train 10 youth participants as a pilot during the Refinement Period, expanding the activity to 100 additional training participants based on results from the pilot. Potential participants for training and internship opportunities will be identified through Community Visioning, with priority given to young men and women from particularly vulnerable households. Eligible participants will be invited to apply and selected on the strength of their application and pre-established criteria. The Activity will pilot use of the Innovation Fund (Intervention 3.1.2.3) to provide start-up capital to young entrepreneurs to launch businesses after completing training and internships.

Intervention 3.1.2.3. Establish Innovation Fund to catalyze economic growth. Amalima Loko will establish a $300,000 Innovation Fund to catalyze entrepreneurship and private sector growth through grants. The fund is one strategy to address lack of access to finance to start or scale up a business– a key problem identified in the ToC. Based on the PEA and learning from the market assessment and Community Visioning in the Refinement period, Amalima Loko will identify active stakeholders (producer groups, SMEs, private sector actors, etc.) with the ability to scale up local enterprises in or serving the target area and will work with them to develop grant activities through a competitive application process. Grantees might increase local sourcing of produce for hotels and tour operators; scale up agribusinesses that stimulate demand for smallholder produce and enable farmers to participate in higher-value output markets, drawing smallholder farmers into profitable value chains; or promote innovative, youth-focused SMEs such as solar charging stations and mobile phone repair. Priority will be given to enterprises led by or serving women, with environmental or food security benefits, and that engage youth.

The Innovation Fund’s two categories will have different eligibility requirements and targeting. The first will support development of IGAs by individuals, including youth entrepreneurship and internship participants, and CAGs such as VS&L groups, producer groups, and CHCs. Grant value will start at $500 to ensure accessibility and alignment with types of micro-enterprises that youth and most vulnerable households may pursue, up to $5,000 to meet the needs of established groups looking to scale up their activities. A matching contribution will be required from grantees to ensure their commitment and investment in the enterprise; the value and form of the matching contribution will be tailored to the grantee to avoid establishing barriers to participation for vulnerable groups. The second category will support the private sector, NGOs, and community-based organizations to establish or expand activities that promote economic growth and innovative solutions. These grants will range from $5,000 to $25,000 and require an equal match (cash or in-kind investment). The Activity anticipates awarding 30 to 40 IGA grants and five to ten in the higher-value category. The Amalima Loko Grants Manager will oversee grant activities, ensuring compliance with the grants manual. Both groups of grants will receive technical support from program staff and relevant GOZ stakeholders.

**IO 3.1.3. Increased income from improved agricultural and livestock marketing**

Crop and livestock production is the main economic activity for vulnerable households in Matabeleland North, so maximizing agricultural earnings is a critical precondition in the ToC for improving sufficiency and the reliability of household income. However, CNFA recognizes agricultural earnings depend on sufficient yields to have a surplus to sell, so there is an important linkage between this IO and IO 2.2.2, Improved natural resource conservation and use practices, which, with improved business planning and reduced post-harvest losses, increases the volume of produce to sell. Increasing investment, innovation, and market functionality, along with smallholder farmers’ improved business skills, will promote systemic growth in agriculture markets. Amalima Loko will ensure that this growth is inclusive and provides accessible opportunities for target sub-populations through intentional prioritization, such as focusing on poultry production to engage women and off-farm value addition opportunities to engage youth. Amalima Loko will also seek to make cattle marketing more accessible to women and youth by promoting alternative sales channels to the traditional auction markets. The Activity will promote private sales and aggregation for group sales, where a buyer will come to the group to buy directly, make sales more accessible for women and youth.

Intervention 3.1.3.1. Conduct Farming as a Business training.The Activity will enable FFS groups and other CAGs engaged in livestock and crops IGAs to participate in FAAB trainings to improve business acumen and increase incomes. FAAB training will develop producers’ business planning, cash flow management, recordkeeping, and marketing skills. To promote marketing skills among livestock producer groups, Amalima Loko will stress livestock grading, pricing, and negotiation skills. AGRITEX and Amalima Loko Agriculture Field Officers will deliver the training jointly to all FFSs and other relevant CAGs, such as VS&Ls and youth groups. The curriculum will be based on Amalima FAAB training materials but will incorporate key SBC messages from the Activity’s formative research, particularly for livestock utilization for productive purposes and crop diversification. The training will include modules and activities tailored to the needs and concerns of women and youth around crop and livestock marketing. Training will be delivered once weekly over eight to ten weeks during the dry season, when farmers have fewer demands on their time, and at times and locations best suited for women. VACs are also a key group for FAAB training, as they play important roles in promoting local agriculture market growth by building linkages with input suppliers and offtakers, innovating business models that work for their communities. For example, the Activity will train VACs to negotiate sales agreements to provide local produce for hotels or school feeding programs and be introduced to models and market actors for aggregation of produce for group sales. The training will also strengthen the capacity of VACs to understand and address the concerns of women and youth.

Intervention 3.1.3.2. Design and incorporate livestock utilization SBC messages into training. Producers in Matabeleland hesitate to sell or consume livestock, even at times when household nutritional needs are unmet and livestock deaths are likely. Interviews with GOZ stakeholders and focus groups in Matabeleland North and experience from Amalima reveal that this is the case across the region. The social status conveyed by livestock ownership and the practical value of holding livestock as assets in the absence of reliable banking options limit farmers’ willingness to use livestock for purposes such as sales or consumption and have impeded adoption of some Amalima-promoted practices, such as selective sales during drought periods. During the Refinement period, Amalima Loko will explore drivers of this behavior to develop an effective strategy for promoting a more diversified livestock management strategy. Incorporating effective messaging or negotiated behavior change into FAAB and livestock management training and engaging VACs in SBC efforts will help producers maximize the benefits of livestock ownership, weighing the opportunities and risks of various uses of livestock including sales, consumption, and asset accumulation. This intervention will support the emphasis on increased animal-source foods promoted by Intervention 3.2.3.2.

Intervention 3.1.3.3. Introduce layered income-generating activities. Amalima Loko’s promotion of IGAs will diversify household income streams by layering onto FFS, VS&L, CHCs, and other CAG activities. Experience from Amalima shows that IGAs tend to focus on agriculture production diversification, agribusiness, and food processing; the market assessment will identify promising opportunities that may include such non-farm activities such as handicrafts, community-based tourism, fishing, and wild or forest products. VACs and paravets also engage in agriculture service delivery as an IGA. IGAs increase and diversify income, promoting resilience to agricultural shocks. When layered with VS&L groups, IGAs can increase loan portfolios. Amalima Loko will support CAGs with IGAs by identifying opportunities, building on the market assessment (Intervention 3.1.2.1); business training through FAAB; improved technical support through VACs, paravets, and project staff; and grants through the Innovation Fund. Anticipated IGA options based on Amalima’s experience and focus group discussions in Matabeleland North include goat breeding; poultry and egg production; fodder production and processing; goat or cattle finishing, marketing, and aggregating; manure production, seed multiplication, and fertilizer aggregation, transport, drying, processing, and threshing.

#### Sub-purpose 3.2. Improved nutrition and health for women of reproductive age and children under five

###### IO 3.2.1. Improved nutritional adequacy

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Figure 1-12: Proposed Ration Sizes | | |
|  | PLW | CU2 |
| Vegetable Oil (L) | 1.5 | 1 |
| CSB+ (Kg) | 5.5 | 3 |

Improved health and nutrition is a critical adaptive and absorptive capacity. Based on the ToC, inadequate dietary intake is a critical driver of poor health and nutrition. The aim of this IO is to enhance the quantity and quality of food consumed and frequency of meals as a precondition to improving the health and nutrition of women and children. Amalima Loko will address nutritional adequacy during the critical period of vulnerability between conception and a child’s second birthday (the first 1,000 days of life).[[71]](#endnote-72) To improve nutritional adequacy in the immediate term, Amalima Loko will conduct a BSFP in the target areas for PLW and children aged 6–23 months,[[72]](#endnote-73) including corn soy blend plus (CSB+) and vegetable oil in quantities listed in Figure 1-12. The rationale for the selection and nutritional composition of these commodities is detailed in Section 2: Management & Staffing. The BSFP will be closely linked to the Care Group model (IO 3.2.2.) to ensure mothers and caregivers adopt recommended complementary IYCF and household hygiene and sanitation practices, but participation in the BSFP will be unconditional to ensure that there are as few barriers as possible for the most vulnerable households to particpiate. This IO is complemented by interventions in Purpose 2 that improve the availability and affordability of nutritious foods and access to water in the target areas. The BSFP is informed by Amalima’s significant contributions to reducing stunting in target areas. As detailed in the Activity Learning Plan (Annex 10), Amalima Loko will monitor a cluster of wards in Tsholotsho designated as a control group[[73]](#endnote-74) to identify interventions that sustain improved health and nutrition outcomes absent direct project support and the BSFP.

Amalima Experience – Linkages with Clinics

The Amalima Final Evaluation Report notes, “most clinic nurses reported that supplementary feeding rations attracted many people to the health facilities, including members of the apostolic faith who previously shunned health services ([key informant interviews] clinic nurses). They were also provided additional health services including growth monitoring, vitamin A supplements, early [antenatal care] bookings, and immunizations, in addition to the food rations.” As a result of increased service delivery, the clinics accessed additional funds, improving service delivery quality according to clinic staff.

Intervention 3.2.1.1. Provide monthly blanket supplementary feeding for PLW and children aged 6–23 months. Building on Amalima’s collaborations with the MOHCC (see text box), Amalima Loko will arrange to use health centers as strategic BSFP distribution sites. This will drive other positive health-seeking behaviors, given that PLW and CU2 caregivers will readily access growth monitoring, immunizations, and other vital health services. VHWs, Lead Mothers, and community leaders will mobilize and sensitize communities and potential beneficiaries to upcoming BSFPs (when and how to register), beginning in March 2021. The Amalima Loko team has identified 55 health centers poised to become BSFP distribution sites (33 for Phase I and 22 in Phase II). Within four months, the Amalima Loko team will select secondary BSFP sites to ensure more than 90 percent of beneficiaries can access sites no farther than 10km from their homes.

VHWs will collaborate with the Activity’s Commodity Distribution Assistants to support monthly registration of eligible beneficiaries – pregnant women who present clinic antenatal cards and CU2 caregivers with child health cards. Registrants will receive Amalima Loko monthly supplementary food rations on designated distribution days. Distribution lists will record beneficiaries’ personal details and the dates they received the rations. To ensure BSFP days and times are convenient for women with heavy seasonal and daily workloads, Amalima Committees will recruit and confer with beneficiary volunteers, who will also have key logistical roles, such as crowd control and offloading and stacking rations. This active involvement adds dignity to these events and drive local ownership.

Intervention 3.2.1.2. Promote improved nutrition, care, and hygiene behaviors during BSF***P*** distributions. Amalima Loko will work closely with MOHCC to engage nurses, environmental health technicians, and other health center staff in delivering informational and behavior change messages on topics like recommended IYCF practices, maternal nutrition, how to prepare CSB+ rations, and when children need immunizations. BSFP days will provide venues for these activities. At health centers, Care Groups and beneficiaries will experience edutainment and other methods (for example, songs or forum theater) that communicate targeted SBC messages and promote discussion on positive health-seeking behaviors (e.g., vitamin A supplementation, family planning, HIV prevention, antenatal care visits, menstrual hygiene, and prevention and treatment of common childhood illnesses). Distribution days can also build awareness of national health days and other health campaigns. The Amalima Loko team will collaborate with MOHCC to identify specific, contextualized health and nutrition issues. For example, Binga and other malaria-prone areas require heightened messaging on malaria prevention, while messaging in Lupane and Hwange districts should dispel misconceptions around children and pregnant women eating eggs and other nutritious foods. Intense local engagement at every step of this process, along with formative research during the Refinement period, will identify the most critical behavioral and health issues for each context. The Amalima Loko team will then develop and pre-test brief key messages to be conveyed to PLW and CU2 caregivers at BSFP sites. Messaging will incorporate up to three small, doable actions that are reinforced by Care Group sessions, home visits, and other village-based behavior change interventions.

Intervention 3.2.1.3. Motivate BSFP beneficiaries to participate in Care Groups. An Amalima learning study[[74]](#endnote-75) found that children whose caregivers participated in Care Groups consumed twice as much animal-source foods as those who did not take part. Therefore, VHWs and Lead Mothers will conduct listening sessions to understand barriers that prevent Care Group participation, and possible household and community-based strategies to overcome the barriers. Amalima Loko will support VHWs, Lead Mothers, and community leaders to recruit BSFP beneficiaries into Care Groups and ensure that groups are implemented well so caregivers accept the opportunity cost of participation. To this end, Amalima Loko will develop songs, dramas, and testimonials that promote the benefits of joining a Care Group. The Community Visioning process will include outreach to traditional leaders and community sensitization to the benefits of Care Groups to further encourage participation. The Activity will provide certificates or awards annually to mark successful recruitment and recognize groups or communities where at least 60 percent of BSFP beneficiaries participate in Care Groups.

Essential Nutrition Actions

The Care Group model promotes the essential nutrition actions – key evidence-based actions, including:

* Optimal nutrition for women (specifically PLW)
* Adequate intake of iron, folic acid, and vitamin A to prevent and control anemia in women and children
* Adequate intake of iodine for all household members
* Early initiation of and exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months.
* Optimal complementary feeding with and continued breastfeeding for children aged 6–23 months.
* Nutritional care of sick and malnourished children
* Prevention of vitamin A deficiency in women and children

###### IO 3.2.2. Increased knowledge of optimal care, nutrition, and WASH practices

Amalima Loko will improve recommended practices for preventing and treating undernutrition especially, during the critical period between conception and a child’s second birthday, and encourage health-seeking behaviors throughout other life stages – critical pathways to increase health and nutrition outcomes for women and children, as noted in the ToC. Proposed interventions, aligned with the National Nutrition Strategy and MOHCC Food and Nutrition Security Policy, will contribute to addressing underlying causes of malnutrition (provision of adequate care for children and women, access to basic health services, and a healthy environment).

Intervention 3.2.2.1. Revise Care Group curricula in collaboration with MOHCC. Beginning in Quarter 2 of Year 1, the Amalima Loko team will collaborate with MOHCC to refine and revise Amalima Care Group curricula to reflect context-specific findings of formative research, adolescent nutrition,[[75]](#endnote-76) sexual and reproductive health,[[76]](#endnote-77) spacing of pregnancies, and menstrual hygiene. Revisions will also promote consumption of enriched porridge, nutritious snacks for children, and animal-source foods. A revised module on livelihood opportunities will encourage the participation of all mothers and caretakers in VS&L and livelihood groups and CHCs.

Intervention 3.2.2.2. Establish and operationalize Care Groups. Over the life of the award, Amalima Loko will establish about 2,850 Care Groups in target areas. According to discussions with the MOHCC Provincial Nutritionist, only semi- to non-functional IYCF support groups exist in these areas, but no Care Groups. Due to sparse population in the target areas and the continued support mothers of young children need, Care Group participation will be expanded to mothers and caretakers of children under five years of age.

Amalima: The Multiplier Effect of Care Groups

Under Amalima, 425 VHWs coached and mentored 1,574 Lead Mothers on key IYCF messages. Through the multiplier effect, the trained Lead Mothers reached over 98,000 households in rural areas with key messages promoting adoption of recommended IYCF behaviors.

Because Care Groups create a multiplier effect (see text box), reaching households at low cost,[[77]](#endnote-78) Amalima Loko will work with MOHCC to form new Care Groups throughout the target area. Nutrition Field Officers, working with MOHCC Nurses and Ward Nutrition Coordinators will select approximately 570 VHWs to participate in training-of-trainers training in setting up Care Groups and train and support Lead Mothers. In turn, Lead Mothers will be trained as daily counterparts for mothers, and caregivers in the village will each run one Care Group. Each Field Officer, with the Nurse and Ward Nutrition Coordinator, will conduct quarterly supportive mentorship visits to groups of up to ten VHWs. In turn, VHWs will mentor and coach Lead Mothers monthly. Amalima proved this approach is sustainable.

Amalima Loko will provide VHWs job aids, bags, t-shirts, hats, and bicycles (in collaboration with World Bicycle Relief) and support them to set up Care Groups and train Lead Mothers. Trainings will build skills that contribute to social cohesion and positive group dynamics and highlight adolescent-friendly approaches that attract young mothers to sessions.[[78]](#endnote-79) Lead Mothers discuss adoption of recommended IYCF and hygiene behaviors at monthly Care Group sessions. Field staff will verify the improvement of VHW outcomes. The structure of the Care Group approach is depicted in Annex 23.

The Activity will use known effective strategies and formative research to encourage at least 60 percent of Care Group participantsto take part in at least one other Activity intervention as their daily workloads allow, such as VS&Ls, as a diversification and resilience strategy. This will be an integral pathway to improve self-reliance for members. Amalima Loko will also use known effective strategies to encourage cross-participation, including look and learn visits to promote learning and sharing of ideas between groups; drama and skits to showcase the benefits of participating in other interventions; and awards or certificates for villages with high integration. Robust monitoring will compare impacts for Care Group participants who benefited from other interventions versus those who did not.

Intervention 3.2.2.3. Mentor and include young mothers in Care Groups. Amalima Loko field staff will increase young women’s participation in Care Groups by promoting and facilitating mentor-mentee relationships with older mothers and integrating activities like netball and cooking competitions, embraced by Amalima Care Groups. The Activity will leverage recommendations in a 2016 IMC study on Adolescent Nutrition on peer-to-peer models, mobile phone messaging, and linkages for young women to agricultural and horticultural interventions.[[79]](#endnote-80)

Intervention 3.2.2.4. Establish Community Health Clubs.CHCs are a well-established, proven modality that Amalima used to address hygiene and sanitation at the community or village level. The clubs offer a mechanism for delivering a complete health program with various stages including initial hygiene promotion training, construction of WASH facilities (latrines), and IGA activities to finance WASH improvements. Though previously effective, the CHC model has become dormant. According to the Matabeleland North MOHCC (DEHOs from the districts), the primary reasons they went dormant were that they were not receiving support from the MOHCC, and they were based in remote areas so the Village Health Workers were unable to travel to them regularly to help mobilize communities and promote good hygiene. Without support, CHCs became de-motivated and inactive.

Amalima Loko will apply strategies to motivate communities to revitalize CHCs in target areas and establish 400 more, each with 15 to 20 self-selected members. The Activity will collaborate with MOHCC Environment Health Technicians and VHWs to train, coach, and mentor CHC members in the Participatory Health and Hygiene Education curriculum, on topics like community mobilization, safe handling and storage of water sources, skin diseases, diarrhea, menstrual hygiene management, malaria, and hand hygiene. Formative research will inform context-specific strategies, such as filtration with moringa pods.

The trainings will prepare CHCs to recommend and support new practices, structural WASH improvements, and household and village level SBC, such as hand-washing at critical times, tippy-tap hand-washing stations, and rubbish pits and latrines located away from water sources. Adoption of hygiene behaviors will be complemented by the presence of functional physical watershed management assets that supply water for hand-washing and safe drinking water (see Purpose 2). CHCs will promote zero-open defecation and self-supply latrines, supported by messaging developed by the SBC team including dramas, skits, and other interactive approaches. A critical sustainability strategy for CHCs is tight integration with VS&L and IGA groups to finance latrine construction.[[80]](#endnote-81) CHCs will also be responsible for monthly community clean-up campaigns and community-level observance of global WASH and other significant days. Amalima Loko will recognize high-performing CHCs with certificates or awards at annual community events or WASH days.

Intervention 3.2.2.5. Introduce the Male Champion model.Amalima Loko will build on and promote the successful Amalima Male Champions campaign, which increased male involvement and uptake of recommended maternal and child health and nutrition practices.[[81]](#endnote-82) Field Officers will collaborate with local and government stakeholders to identify and recruit candidates, in line with a pre-developed selection criterion and community interest. Amalima staff will facilitate, coach, and mentor Male Champions using the Amalima curriculum designed to appeal to men. Male Champions will recruit others willing to work to increase male involvement in IYCF, hygiene and other key areas and commit to trying the promoted behaviors. At monthly meetings, Field Officers will support Male Champions to facilitate all-male cooking classes, CHCs, and the project’s VS&L and IGA interventions. This participation will heighten the visibility of Male Champions and positively influence cultural norms.

###### IO 3.2.3. Improved dietary diversity

Although several other interventions will support increased production and income and improved availability of diverse foods), the ToC highlights diverse consumption as a critical pathway for improving health and nutrition in women and children. Healthier children and mothers are better able to absorb inevitable shocks and stressors. For this reason, Amalima Loko plans explicit behavior change interventions that enhance household capacity to consume more diverse and nutrient-dense foods, with special focus on animal-source foods, diverse and iron-rich vegetables, and indigenous foods. This will be achieved by transferring knowledge and skills to parents and caregivers on growing or gathering these foods, incorporating them into meals, and demonstrating that they can be affordable. The intervention will rely on localized data from the Cost of Diet study[[82]](#endnote-83) conducted during the Refinement period, which will build knowledge of the availability and affordability of a nutritious diet using locally available foods.

Intervention 3.2.3.1. Promote backyard and micro-gardens.Amalima Loko will support the establishment of backyard and micro-gardens that yield nutritious crops and improve dietary diversity in households: leafy green vegetables, tomatoes, pumpkins, butternut, carrots, and legumes. Assistance will include participants leveraging their VS&L funds to buy inputs and low-cost, easily accessible climate-smart technologies, such as polythene-sheet-lined trenches and pits and raised beds in old vehicle tires – technologies that use minimal water, reduce seepage and evaporation, and minimally disturb soil and soil organisms. In most cases, farmers will plant gardens from retained seeds. Where communities can afford them and quality seeds are available in small enough quantities for home gardens instead of bulk purchases, Amalima Loko staff will encourage growing hybrids. Where there is demand for such crops as onions, beetroot, butternuts, and carrots which may not be locally available, the Activity will promote input supply strategies that utilize VACs. Field Staff will identify model farmers who use these technologies and support them to host demonstration gardens and mini versions of FFSs.

Intervention 3.2.3.2. Adapt and provide Healthy Harvest training. Amalima Loko Nutritionists and the SBC team will work with district- and provincial-level FNSCs to adapt Amalima’s Healthy Harvest module, informed by formative research and a new market survey. The adaptation will stress animal-source protein[[83]](#endnote-84) with affordable, drought-resistant, indigenous foods crops such as baobab, tamarind, and monkey orange and mopane worms. The module will include recipes and a calendar to track the availability of promoted foods across seasons. Amalima Loko will develop and cascade the Healthy Harvest approach initially with MOHCC Ward Nutrition Coordinators and AGRITEX Officers, who will train VHWs, Lead Mothers, and Lead Farmers. The Activity will support these actors to cascade trainings to Care Groups, Male Champion Groups, and FFS Groups, including by developing interactive approaches such as flash cards on use of moringa leaf in Binga.

Healthy Harvest Approach

Healthy Harvest activities train households to produce diverse, nutritious foods with minimal use of pesticides and to apply compost and manure, rear small livestock, and adopt recommended harvesting and preservation technologies including sun drying and blanching. Healthy Harvest promotes consumption of indigenous fruits and vegetables. The trainings strengthen links between nutrition and agriculture where communities produce nutritious foods using practices promoted by Lead Farmers and Lead Mothers.

Intervention 3.2.2.4. Develop context-specific household recipe books and cooking classes. In line with the revised Healthy Harvest manual, the Activity will adapt Amalima recipe books that promoted nutritious foods for families and measurably increased dietary diversity for young children.[[84]](#endnote-85) These adaptations will reflect findings from the Cost of Diet Study, stress consumption of animal-source foods by PLW and their timely introduction for CU2, and indigenous and preserved foods. Recipes will use dried and ground vegetables and detail ways to store foods like cowpeas, groundnuts, Bambara nuts, pumpkin, and melon seeds. Trainings will teach Lead Mothers to demonstrate new recipes to Care Group members, dispelling the belief that nutritious foods are expensive and indigenous foods inferior. Amalima will also support demonstrations in male-only cooking classes and annual cooking competitions for Care Groups, which are likely to attract younger mothers.[[85]](#endnote-86)

Gender, youth, and social inclusion. Gendered structural causes of food insecurity and malnutrition, rooted in marginalization of specific groups, will be addressed by targeting men and boys as agents of change to improve health-seeking behaviors and consider traditional beliefs that limit equitable roles for men in childcare and feeding. Male change agents will reinforce norms and values that promote gender equity and women’s agency while discouraging child marriage and gender-based violence. Building on Amalima’s success in engaging Male Champions to partner with their wives in childcare and other household tasks,[[86]](#endnote-87) Amalima Loko will expand male engagement in nutrition-sensitive areas like joint decision-making in household production, processing, sale, and consumption of produce, and joint control over household income. Amalima Loko will promote VS&L as a tool for women’s empowerment and social cohesion, building on evidence from the Amalima Final Evaluation Report and global learning. The Activity will notably pilot innovative approaches to extend the benefits of VS&L engagement to youth and the most vulnerable households during the Refinement period.

Sustainability and exit strategy. The VS&L model for building financial skills and access to financial services is proven and sustainable. Amalima Loko will expand VS&Ls to increase access to financial services. Prospects for sustainability for VS&Ls are good; Amalima noted that a significant number of VS&Ls started without direct support. To diversify income and agricultural and livestock marketing, the sustainability strategy is based on working with and through GOZ and private sector actors to foster greater linkages, knowledge transfer, and business relationships. The Activity’s strategy for sustaining nutrition improvements in target areas is to link Care Groups with VS&L groups, household gardens, and other agricultural production and income-generating activities, while strengthening links between Care Groups and health centers and developing and delivering effective messaging on the benefits of diversifying diets with nutritionally dense foods. These interconnected interventions will PLW and caregivers of CU2 provide resources and knowledge needed to sustain improved nutritional outcomes after they graduate from Care Groups. Given the high food insecurity in targeted districts, the BSFP will continue until August 2025, when the Activity phases out.

## Strategy for Refinement Period

***Effective use of the Refinement period.*** CNFA’s dynamic Activity Learning Plan (Annex 10) supports active, intentional learning during the Refinement period and throughout the award via collaboration with partners, other programs, participants, and stakeholders. Refinement period activities will generate and use evidence to augment knowledge and experience from Amalima. These data will inform understanding of the local context, needs and behaviors of target sub-populations, and pathways for these groups to break the cycle of food insecurity and vulnerability. This robust learning agenda supports adaptive management by ensuring managers have the right information at the right time and are empowered to use it to modify the conceptual framework, ToC, approaches, and workplan. In the Refinement period, CNFA will fine-tune intevention prioritization, building on what we know works, acknowledging critical gaps or the need for new solutions, testing innovative concepts, rapidly adapting and scaling promising ideas, and moving away from approaches that evidence does not support.

Engaging program participants, government, and local stakeholders***.*** Community and stakeholder engagement is so central to the Amalima Loko approach that it has been elevated to a Purpose, and the name of the Activity draws from the concept of working together in a true and genuine way. Community Visioning will be the entry point for implementation in Year 1 and the guiding structure for implementation. As detailed under IO 1.1.1, Amalima Loko will begin local consultations in January 2021 with stakeholders. Through community consultations, additional stakeholders will be identified and engaged in the Community Visioning process. The consultations will help guide and prioritize the Refinement period learning agenda. At the same time, Amalima Loko will engage with relevant GOZ and donor-funded development initiatives, such as ZRBF, and USAID’s Pathways and Resilient Waters programs, to promote joint learning, identify overlap, and collaboratively prioritize interventions. Beyond the Refinement period, Amalima Loko will continue to engage with stakeholders through the Community Visioning process and annual reflections to review the Activity’s progress and obtain feedback and guidance on its focus, approaches, and sustainability strategy.

Prioritized formative research and piloting of new approaches. Based on the Amalima Final Evaluation Report, global best practices and evidence, and established processes like ward DRR planning, several proven key interventions (such as BSFP, Care Groups, and VS&L) will begin during the Refinement period. The Amalima Loko team will conduct formative research to address priority evidence and knowledge gaps that remain after the application stage literature review, key informant interviews with government stakeholders, community focus groups in target districts, the collective local and global experience of consortium partners, and the ToC development process. These gaps are identified throughout the technical approach and some are summarized in Figure 1-13. Knowledge gaps are organized thematically into three areas of inquiry. To improve cost and operational efficiency and reduce burdens on respondents, studies will address multiple research questions across the Areas of Inquiry where possible. In addition to research studies, pilot activities will determine the effectiveness of innovative or particularly challenging approaches, including financial support for scaling up and improving the inclusion of the most vulnerable households in VS&L and community support mechanisms for those households, such as revitalizing grain banks and social funds.

Tsholotsho presents a particularly useful opportunity for piloting interventions because of the foundation of VS&L and other CAGs remaining from Amalima. Amalima Loko will post two Field Officers in Nkunzi ward, which was part of Amalima, but the ward did not receive the full program treatment during Amalima Loko. The Field Officers will promote the ongoing sustainability of development gains from Amalima and build capacity in new areas such as watershed management and VS&L innovations. However, the Field Officers will take advantage of learning opportunities, observing what sustainability challenges exist after Amalima ends with the ongoing functioning of CAGs, committees, volunteers, and assets. That learning will inform Amalima Loko sustainability plans, with adjustments for the sustainability challenges built in from the beginning of the Activity. Required environmental compliance studies will also be conducted during the Refinement period (see Annex 8, Environmental Safeguards Plan).

##### FIGURE 1-13: RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR EACH PURPOSE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Research Questions for Each Purpose | Study | Key programming decisions resulting from studies |
| Purpose 1: Enhanced and inclusive local ownership over food security and resilience planning and development | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| What are the most important adaptive and absorptive capacities at the community level that promote greater resilience to shocks and stresses? How do these relate to evidence on improving social cohesion? What dynamics of social cohesion can and should be measured? | | STRESS Assessment | Most important adaptive and absorptive capacities will be promoted. These will be used to improve social cohesion within the communities and determine how the program should measure change in social cohesion over time. |
| Does strengthening local governance and community capacity with the Community Visioning process lead to resilience and food security as measured by improved household access and use of adaptive capacities, improved nutrition rates, and improved responses? | | Qualitative social research | The results will reveal if strengthening of local governance and community capacity leads to resilience and food security. If the findings are positive this will be promoted if not methods will be identified to improve the community visioning process. |
| What are the main hazards, shocks, and stresses, assess resilience capacities (social, ecological, and economic capital), and what are their impacts on livelihoods and community resources? | | Participatory Capacity Vulnerability Assessment | By understanding the larger watershed issues and context and developing a more detailed understanding of local risks, DRR Committees will be better able to use a landscape planning approach in developing DRR Plans |
| What is the role of remittances and migration-related challenges? Identify gaps and interventions to minimize negative consequences of migration and maximize benefits. | | Market Assessment, Political Economy Analysis | Programmers will assist communities to use remittances to increase their income in a sustainable manner such as engaging in IGAs using remittances. Rather than to use all for consumables. |
| Are community grain banks feasible? Are community support funds through VS&L groups feasible? Are there other community-based safety nets in use in the project area and are they effective? | | Qualitative social research | Community safety nets approach to be adjusted based on results. |
| **Purpose 2: Health and availability of soil, water, and plant resources within the watershed improved** | | | |
| What is the water potential and sustainability of alluvial aquifers in the Gwayi and Shangani sand rivers and alluvial deposits in Binga? | Modeling the water potential and sustainability of alluvial aquifers in the Gwayi and Shangani sand rivers and alluvial deposits in Binga. | | Identification of aquifers that can be targeted for recharge methods. |
| What is the effectiveness of soil conservation measures in reducing erosion rates? | Estimating soil erosion and effectiveness of land-use interventions using geo-tagging of critical areas of runoff and time series analysis of vegetation and fractional cover indices. | | Identification of land use interventions that can be used to reduce soil erosion most effectively. |
| Which areas of selected micro catchments have the potential for groundwater recharge? | Use of remote sensing and GIS to map groundwater recharge potential zones. | | Identifying areas in micro catchments for groundwater recharge. |
| Which land-use interventions are most effective in maintaining soil moisture? | Monitoring the effectiveness of land-use interventions through the use of remote sensing methods that measure soil moisture. | | Identification of the most effective land-use methods to improve soil moisture. |
| Is the holistic land management model applicable in communal lands? What can be learned from it and applied? | Social feasibility study | | Key methods to promote holistic land management in communal lands. What can be applied and what needs to be addressed. |
| What are the most contextually appropriate and profitable climate-smart agricultural interventions? | Pre- and post- harvest Agricultural Assessment | | The identified climate smart methods will be replicated throughout the program. |
| Is the current micro-catchment-level data accurate? | Micro-catchment-level Data Verification | | Verified maps will inform the Participatory Vulnerability Assessment (PCVA) by Watersheds Cluster Steering Groups. |
| Are the key priorities laid out in the Watershed Management Plans accurate? | Watershed Management Plan Priority Verification | | After Watershed Management Plans are developed through the Community Visioning process, the project will verify the feasibility, environmental impact, sustainability, appropriate methods for asset development, and project costs are accurate prior to moving forward with the construction of water points. |
| What factors contribute most strongly to sustainability and effectiveness of Asset Management Committees? What fundraising strategies do successful groups use for O&M? | Post-program review of Amalima AMCs | | Sustainability factors will help shape the strategy for training and supporting AMCs. If results find that AMCs are not sustainable or effective after the life of program, will seek alternative model. |
| What affordable mechanization solutions are available? Have innovative mechanization models such as community-based mechanization solutions worked elsewhere and are they applicable in the project area? Is donkey drawn potholer effective? | Desk review, qualitative research and piloting of new technologies | | Adjustments to promoted practices based on the availability of mechanization. Adjustments to strategy to promote mechanization. |
| **Purpose 3: Human health and livelihoods improved** | | | |
| What are the most contextually specific causes of malnutrition? | Nutrition Causal Analysis | | The program will seek to address the causes using the various interventions to reduce malnutrition to meet the set targets. |
| How do households and individuals earn money within the target communities? What non-farm livelihoods exist and can absorb additional entrants, especially for women and youth, within Matabeleland North? What are potential new livelihoods that are needed within the market? What are the technical and transferable skills needed to take advantage of these opportunities? What is the role of remittances? What are the impacts of migration both for the migrant and for the rest of the household? What are the intra-household dynamics of migration, especially for women and youth? | Participatory Market Assessment | | Inform the Activity’s strategy for improved employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, increased agricultural earnings, and preparation for empowered migration. It will identify demand for technical and transferable skills for the local market and migrants as well as on- and off-farm opportunities for labor and entrepreneurship; describe constraints and opportunities in the wider market system for agricultural and fishing products and other local industries such as crafts; and note supporting services or functions that may help people find steady and decent work. Refine the Activity’s strategy to promote empowered migration, ensuring migrants have the skills and support they need to be successful and households and communities can maximize the benefits of remittances. |
| What form of capacity building and delivery mechanism best serves youth and results in marketable skills in Mat North (e.g. in-person training with a public provider, private providers, on-the-job training, etc)? How does this differ across genders? | Gender, Youth, and Social Inclusion Assessment | | Tailor the capacity building approach to best meet the needs of male and female young people. |
| Which inclusion interventions (Care Groups, VS&Ls, male champions) show the greatest impact and cost-effectiveness on access and use of resilience capacities, and greater outcomes such as food security and gender equality? | Political Economy Analysis | | Focus will be on interventions with the greatest impact to help realize greater outcomes. |
| What is the availability and affordability of a nutritious diet using locally available foods for households and individuals? What are appropriate interventions (e.g. recipe book, cooking classes) for each local context? | Cost of Diet Study | | Program will focus on available and affordable nutritious diets. Growing of some of the foods will be encouraged at community and household gardens. This will improve the availability and affordability at household and community level. |
| What are livestock holders’ motivations for investing in livestock and livestock use (asset vs business or consumable resource)? What are effective messages to promote investment in livestock for various uses? | Livestock Assessment | | The program will use the effective messages to promote investment in livestock and this will be done through use of program staff and community volunteers. |
| What are the contextualized barriers and behaviors on nutrition, caregiving, and hygiene at the household and community level and identify strategies for improving behaviors? | Barrier analysis and behavior change formative research | | Develop strategies to counter the barriers and promote health seeking behavior and good hygiene practices that will reduce the effects to the barriers. |
| What are the factors influencing functionality and non-functionality of gardens/irrigation schemes? | Functionality Assessment | | Use the best practices from the functional gardens to replicate in non-functional gardens, find the technical, seasonal, factors and promote strategies to ensure functionality in all gardens. |
| What are the main causes of crop losses in the districts? What are the factors inhibiting farmers to adopt measures that reduce these losses? | Crop Assessment  Production capacity | | Programmers will identify Post Harvest strategies that will be implemented in the course of the program |
| What are the current seed supply systems in the project area and what are the barriers towards improving them? | Seed Assessment | | To identify current seed supply systems, barriers and identify channels for seed provisions |
| What are the crop and livestock pest and disease management indigenous knowledge systems currently in place that can be used or adapted by the program? | Indigenous Knowledge Systems assessment | | To identify used indigenous knowledge systems in crop and livestock pest and disease management for adaptation in other areas as locally available alternatives |
| How does the sequencing and layering of various interventions within savings groups contribute to building adaptive capacities? Which mechanism(s) are the most impactful in driving adaptive capacity? What factors contribute most strongly to the success and sustainability of VS&L groups? What IGAs from Amalima groups have proven sustainable over time? | Qualitative Social Research and Pilot activities; Post-program review of Amalima VS&L groups | | Adjusting VS&L activities to maximize benefits |
| What is the functionality status of savings groups in view of the COVID 19 pandemic and the deteriorating economic situation? How can the program better support savings groups navigate the current economic instability, hyperinflation, and currency shortages? | Functionality assessment | | To assess the functionality of the VS&L groups, currency and how the funds are being used |
| How can VS&L be made more inclusive and accessible for marginalized groups, particularly youth and young mothers? What factors promote engagement of marginalized groups? | Qualitative Social Research and Pilot activities | | Develop and adjust VS&L inclusion strategy based on results. |
| **Cross-cutting** | | | |
| What are the underlying gender and youth dynamics within communities? How do women, men, and youth spend their time? Explore the barriers to participation for young women and young men, including new parents, and uncover possible solutions. | Gender, Youth, and Social Inclusion Assessment | | Honing strategies to address women’s time poverty, integrating learning across program interventions and approaches to ensure transformative impacts for women and youth. |
| What are the impacts of COVID-19 on lives and livelihoods in the project area? | Qualitative and Desk Research | | Possible modification of program approaches to address limiting factors such as reduced remittances and agriculture market disruptions. Operational adjustments based on best practices. |
| What are the motivational thresholds for men and women of different ages for fee-for-service roles promoted by the Activity? For which community services are community members willing to pay? | Qualitative Research | | Strategy for engaging community service providers and the business case for various services to be adjusted based on results. |
| What factors motivate men, women, and youth volunteers of different ages? Do volunteers maintain motivation and continue to function after the program ends? What factors contribute to sustainability? | Post-program review of Amalima volunteers | | Program approaches to be adjusted based on the sustainability of volunteer model for various positions. Incorporate best practices to maximize sustainable volunteer motivation. |
| What contextualized factors most influence equitable and inclusive access to and effective use of resilience capacities the program aims to strengthen? What barriers to participation exist for women, young women and men, including new parents? | Gender, Youth, and Social Inclusion Assessment | |  |
| How are systems and structures at the household, community, and institutional level currently functioning vis-a-vis the promotion of key resilience capacities? What positive capacities and key system actors can Amalima Loko leverage and build on? | Qualitative Social Research | | Prioritization, layering and sequencing of activities to be adjusted to maximize resilience outcomes |

Research during the Refinement period will be led by CLA Advisor and carried out to the greatest extent possible by long-term staff and community stakeholders to promote learning and ownership of results, see Section 2: Management & Staffing. The team will be supported by technical experts and consultants as needed. Robust international travel budgets are included for partners (especially Mercy Corps and TMG), reflecting their central roles in formative research in the Refinement period.

Outcomes of the Refinement period. Specific outcomes of the Refinement period include the revised ToC, updated implementation plan, completion of required environmental compliance documents and the gender analysis, and tested SBC strategy. The staffing pattern and partner roles will be fine-tuned to reflect the revised strategy. Refinement period outcomes will be finalized with USAID at the Refine and Implement Culmination Workshop. By engaging project staff, communities, and other stakeholders as drivers of its research agenda, Amalima Loko will promote a culture of learning from the start and increase understanding and investment in its conceptual framework.

# Management and Staffing

## Management Structure and Institutional Capacity

Amalima Loko will benefit from robust and adaptive management systems that CNFA has developed to support food security and rural resilience programs worldwide, which contributed to the success of Amalima in Matabeleland North and South. The proposed management and staffing plan builds on these successes, while scaling the focus on learning, inclusion, adaptation, and innovation and supporting implementation in Binga, Hwange, Lupane, Nkayi, and Tsholotsho.

### Efficient Use of Resources and Adaptive Management to Achieve Results

The Amalima Loko management structure prioritizes sustainability and efficiency by placing seasoned local staff and partners at the forefront, embedding adaptive management approaches, and facilitating collaborative and holistic activities that build the capacity of key local entities across Matabeleland North. While scaling Amalima approaches, CNFA will introduce and adapt evidence-based strategies and interventions that reflect the deep knowledge of local partners and the context in each ward. CNFA partners, described below, are well-qualified to lead multilayered Community Visioning processes, foster local ownership, and intensify continual learning and technical implementation across an expansive and disconnected geographic area. Our one-team management strategy considers all personnel Amalima Loko staff, rather than staff managed by specific partners for siloed sub-projects. This strategy cultivates a unified vision across purposes and promotes results-driven management.

Geographic reach. To ensure proximity with stakeholders, Amalima Loko will operate from five field offices, (see Figure 2-2 and the Organizational Chart in Annex 13) that include a mix of technical, financial, and operational staff dispersed across targeted districts and wards. Four-member teams of Field Officers—experts in community visioning, agriculture, watershed management, and nutrition—will facilitate interventions with stakeholders in 21 watershed clusters of three to five wards, each. They will travel by motorcycle to communities across their assigned wards and to their respective district offices for reporting and meetings. The Field Officers will engage and strengthen groups and leaders in communities, wards, and districts, working closely with them to strengthen their capacity to assume leadership by the end of the program with decreasing monitoring and coaching. Field Officers will monitor activities, provide feedback on interventions, and use tablets to collect and transmit frontline data and observations for M&E and learning activities.

##### FIGURE 2-2: AMALIMA LOKO DISTRICT OFFICE STRUCTURE



Reporting to the DCOP, District Representatives in technical hub offices in Hwange and Lupane and satellite offices in Binga and Nkaye will provide day-to-day oversight of the Field Officers and lead collaboration with district government, civil society, and private sector stakeholders. Technical Coordinators in these offices will support activities emerging from the Community Visioning process in nutrition, WASH, non-farm livelihoods, and other areas that increase resilience and food security. Technical Coordinators in the Lupane office will support Field Officers in Lupane, Nkayi, and Tsholotsho; Technical Officers in Hwange will support activities in Hwange and Binga. Roving teams of water technicians and engineers will travel throughout targeted wards to oversee assessments and the design and implementation of watershed construction and rehabilitation. Assets Coordinators located in Lupane and Hwange will oversee the planning and resource management of cash for assets (CFA) construction performed by communities, facilitate asset selection in the Community Visioning process, conduct feasibility and environmental studies and manage government permitting.

The Bulawayo office will be the main office from which the COP and DCOP will lead seasoned technical leads, coordinators, and specialists in Bulawayo, Hwange, and Lupane who will be responsible for designing strategies and overseeing interventions across Amalima Loko key technical areas. The Hwange and Lupane offices will be technical hubs; satellite offices in Binga and Nkayi will include the smaller teams required for commodity distribution, district-level coordination, and operational support to field officers.

Management structure for strong, technical implementation. Four highly collaborative teams—the Technical Implementation Unit—will be responsible for strategic design and facilitative implementation of interventions. Three units will support the technical teams to achieve anticipated impacts, as shown in Figure 2-3. Technical teams align with the key drivers of food security in Matabeleland. The composition and responsibilities of all units are described below; their staff, reporting lines, and partner affiliations are shown in the organizational chart in Annex 13.

##### FIGURE 2-3: AMALIMA LOKO INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT FOR RESULTS

Technical Implementation Unit. Led by the DCOP, this unit will drive intervention design and implementation across technical purposes. DCOP Nqobile Ncube of ORAP will ensure close collaboration across teams, clear direction, and strategic support for interventions, including the grants program. Food Security Technical Coordinator (FSTC), Nicholas Nyathi, will support the DCOP in his leadership of the Technical Implementation Unit. They will work as a team to promote cohesion among staff, identify the barriers to food security, and develop strategies to sequence and adapt activities as appropriate. Under their leadership, the technical teams will design and oversee implementation of interventions in their respective technical areas, providing guidance and mentoring to cluster-based teams of Field Technical Officers in Hwange, Lupane, Binga, and Nkayi. The FSTC will ensure these teams work collaboratively with the Community Visioning Lead for continuous responsiveness of interventions to the needs and plans laid out by communities through the Community Visioning Process. He also will ensure technical staff work closely with the MEL team to ensure learning from the R&I process and emerging best practices and findings of learning activities, are reflected in appropriately integrated, layered, and sequenced interventions. Technical leads and coordinators will provide direction to Field Officers, who will report directly to District Representatives overseen by the DCOP. In addition to teams listed in the table below, Program Compliance Officers in Lupane and Hwange will collaborate with Environmental Specialist in Bulawayo to ensure infrastructure activities align with USAID and GOZ construction and environmental regulations.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ****Technical Unit**** | ****Key Responsibilities**** |
| **Community Visioning**  **Lead: Alois Neza Sikuka**  **Members: Community Mobilization Specialist, 2 Community Visioning Coordinators, 11 Field Officers** | * **Initiate and facilitate inclusive, collaborative processes that develop community-owned Ward Transformation Plans** * **Engage government, civil society, and community stakeholders; strengthen facilitation and mentoring skills; strengthen capacity of Field Officers in other clusters** * **Gather and analyze data in communities and facilitate participatory knowledge sharing** |
| **Watershed Management**  **Lead: Louise Nkomo**  **Members: GIS Technician, 2 Water Resource Management Coordinators, 21 Watershed Management Field Officers, Roving Water Team of 4 Water Engineers and 5 Water Technicians** | * **Integrate watershed-management approach into Community Visioning process** * **Strengthen capacity of DRR Committees and Watershed Cluster Steering Group to**   **facilitate improved watershed-management planning**   * **Complete feasibility studies, technical designs, and construction of water access infrastructure and conservation works that comply with USAID and GOZ regulations** * **Train Asset Management Committees on use and maintenance of water infrastructure** |
| **Health**  **Lead: Pamela Murakwani**  **Members: 2 WASH Coordinators, 2 Nutrition Coordinators, 1 M&E Nutrition Coordinator, 21 Health Field Officers** | * **Manage** Blanket Supplementary Feeding Program (BSFP) * Strengthen capacity of Care Groups, Village Health Workers, clinic staff, and Community Health Clubs to improve health and nutrition outcomes * **Lead design and implementation of interventions that improve dietary diversity** |
| **Agriculture and Livelihoods**  **Lead: TBD**  **Members: 2** Value Chain Marketing Coordinators, 2 Ag Production Coordinators, 2 Livestock Coordinators, 2 VS&L Coordinators, 2 Assets Coordinators, 2 Youth Entrepreneurship Coordinators; 21 Agriculture & Livelihoods **Field Officers** | * **Design and support interventions in agriculture, VS&L, and youth entrepreneurship** * **Pilot new community social safety nets** * **Support the Grants Manager to implement the Innovation Fund** * **Oversee planning and resource management of community assets construction** * **Monitor availability of food in local markets and adjust ration delivery as needed** |
| **Resilience**  **Lead:** TBD, with support from Resilience Advisor, Aaron Sundsmo  **Members*:*** 2 Resilience Coordinators | * Ensure integration of best practices in resilience programming * Develop innovative Resilience Measurement System * Disseminate learning on evolving best practices in resilience and food security * Assist scenario planning |
| **Gender, Youth, and Social Dynamics**  **Lead:** America Ndlovu,  **Members:** 2 Gender Coordinators | * Ensure inclusionary strategies and interventions that address women, youth, and other vulnerable groups and the social dimensions of food security and resilience * Manage and support gender analysis and design of the Community Visioning process |

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Unit. Under the supervision of Adaptive Program Design Advisor, Candy Mirrer, staff in this unit will ensure the establishment of learning tools, systems, and processes that will facilitate effective learning during the Refinement Year and throughout implementation. Reporting directly to the COP, the Adaptive Program Design Advisor will be responsible for overseeing highly complex technical learning and analysis and high-level stakeholder coordination during the refinement period as well. For the first two years she will guide and mentor MEL and all program staff to promote ongoing learning and integration of SBC across program strategies and interventions. By Year 3, the CLA Lead, this position will transition to a local candidate, likely Ms. Yvonne Madondo. This unit is responsible for outcome monitoring, testing of innovations, timely course corrections, and identifying and mitigating inefficiencies and unintended consequences. The unit will use CNFA’s online Management for Results (M4R) system to track interventions and impact, operationalize workplans, and provide analytics on the results and costs of select interventions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MEL Unit | Key Responsibilities |
| ***CLA Team***  **Lead:** Yvonne Madondo | * Ensure active, intentional, and adaptive learning within and across interventions * Test assumptions and design concepts and revise the ToC based on findings * Lead Learning Working Group and establish feedback systems for wide information sharing * Share best practices and assist coordination and joint planning with GOZ and other programs |
| ***M&E Team***  **Lead:** Personal Sithole  **Members:** 4 M&E Officers; Nutrition M&E Coordinator; 2 Database Assistants | * Monitor outcomes and impacts of interventions using qualitative and quantitative methods * Design and manage annual outcome survey, train enumerators, and report findings * Develop and implement training program on M&E for field staff |
| ***Social and Behavior Change Team***  **Lead:** Patricia Ndebele  **Members*:*** 2 SBC Coordinators | * Lead formative research on SBC, pilot new approaches, and train staff on SBC * Design and lead implementation of the SBC strategy across technical areas * Manage pre-testing and monitoring of SBC messaging, materials, and dissemination plans |

The Amalima Loko Communication Officer will support the Learning and Inclusion Unit to share learning, disseminate SBC messaging, increase collaboration, and mobilize communities.

Commodity Management Unit. Led by the Commodity Manager, this unit will manage commodities for the BSFP, ensuring efficiency and compliance with GOZ and USAID regulations. Its staff will apply best practices from ORAP’s commodity management handbook (based on the 2017 TOPS Commodity Management Handbook), as they work with technical teams to monitor food availability in local markets and determine appropriate rations and delivery mechanisms. The Commodity Tracking System (CTS) Assistant will use CTS software to monitor commodity levels. The Commodity Manager will oversee ORAP Warehouse Logistics Officers, Commodity Coordinators, and Commodity Distribution Assistants in district offices and warehouses engaged in logistics, distribution, and tracking. See Section 2.3, Resource Managementfor more details.

Finance and Operations Unit. This unit will provide efficient support for interventions, including grants, coordinating with the CNFA home office to ensure accuracy, cost-effectiveness, and compliance with USAID and GOZ regulations and CNFA policies and procedures. The unit will use CNFA manuals, standard operating procedures, and systems to ensure rapid start-up and compliance. Proposed Operations, Safety, and Security Manager Hilda Mataba and Finance Manager Doubt Makunike have excelled in these roles since the Amalima start-up.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| FIGURE 2-4: PARTNERS IN DISTRICTS | | | |
| **Organization** | **Staff Distribution by Office** | | |
| *Bulawayo* | *Hwange &*  *Lupane* | *Binga &*  *Nkayi* |
| CNFA | 22 | 24 | 0 |
| ORAP | 3 | 52 | 49 |
| Dabane Trust | 2 | 5 | 4 |
| IMC | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| Manoff Group | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Mercy Corps | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| **Total** | 31 | 100 | 49 |

### Local Capacity Engagement

Building on Amalima’s successes, CNFA will work hand-in-hand with local partners ORAP and Dabane. CNFA, as prime, will ensure qualified and committed staff lead impactful interventions and strengthen local partners’ capacity to comply with USAID financial, administrative, and reporting requirements and lead projects. ORAP and Dabane will fill more than two-thirds of the positions in the Amalima Loko organizational chart (see Figure 2-4). Their roles and responsibilities on Amalima Loko reflect these partners’ deep experience in key technical areas and in Matabeleland North.

Nqobile Ncube of ORAP will serve in key DCOP role, overseeing the technical unit. ORAP will also fill all positions on the Community Visioning team; the four District Representative positions, up to 76 Field Officer positions, and 14 positions in four warehouses. Dabane will fill all watershed management positions: the Watershed Management Lead in Bulawayo*,* Watershed Resource Management Coordinators in Hwange and Lupane, and two roving water teams.

The Activity’s success is predicated on engaging and building the capacity of three key groups of local actors: 1. GOZ technical staff; 2. Community Action Groups (CAGs); and private sector entities (see Annex 18, Sustainable Transition Plan).

* The Activity will engage technical staff at different levels in a range of GOZ ministries and agencies to strengthen government capacity to deliver high-quality services—for example, extension services and trainings for health staff. To promote local ownership, Amalima Loko will collaboratively develop training materials and co-facilitate trainings with the GOZ, progressively transitioning to mentoring and support roles.
* A wide range of interventions will engage and build the knowledge and management skills of CAGs such as Care Groups, Community Health Clubs, VS&Ls, Farmer Field Schools, and Asset Management Committees. The Community Visioning process will extend this impact, mobilizing community leaders and building capacity to develop and implement strong, inclusive, and participatory Ward Transformation Plans.
* The Activity’s Innovation Fund will engage private sector input suppliers and other key service providers and build their capacity to expand and sustain enterprises that respond to local needs.

## Management Approach

Amalima Loko will build on the strong, adaptive management approach of Amalima. Collaboration and responsiveness are hallmarks: strong collaboration within and external to the Activity and responsiveness to opportunities and challenges that emerge, such as contextual shifts and shocks.

### Integrated Activity Planning, Implementation, and Coordination

Planned consortium management approaches and processes. Amalima Loko will ensure cohesion across partners through activities that reflect our team’s commitment to a one-team approach and integrated, responsive, and adaptive management. To ensure shared learning and consistency across partners, geographies, and technical areas, the team will institutionalize a COP-led Steering Committee; two Working Groups led by the CLA Lead; and internal and external reflection meetings that engage staff, partners, and stakeholders across technical purposes.

##### FIGURE 2-6. COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS

|  |
| --- |
| **Quarterly meetings of the Steering Committee** will engage representatives of other programs, GOZ, NGOs, and the private sector in discussions that promote joint planning and explore solutions to collective problems. The Steering Committee will review studies, analyses, pilots, and feedback from the Learning Working Group to identify strategies aligned with strategic goals and objectives that promise to achieve impact. |
| **Monthly meetings of the Learning Working Group** will coordinate CLA activities in the Activity Learning Plan, ensuring intentional learning and promoting sharing and integration of learning during implementation. The Working Group will ensure that the Learning Plan is a living document that responds to new questions and opportunities. It is modeled on the Amalima Learning Unit, initiated by COP David Brigham to enable staff to identify key questions, propose studies, and develop evidence-based adaptations and new strategies. |
| **Regular planning meetings of the Outreach Working Group** will coordinate cross-cutting activities among the technical, operations, and senior management teams such as donor events, field visits, internal and external learning events, media outreach, ad hoc information requests, tracking of environmental and branding and marking plans, and coordination and adherence to GOZ protocols. This integrated working group includes the field-based CNFA Program Officer and members of the communications, environmental, operations, and field operations teams. The model is the Amalima TAPAS group, a mid-program innovation that addressed cross-project coordination needs and ensured quick responses. |
| **Annual external and internal annual reflection meetings** will inform adaptive and coordinated management approaches. External reflection meetings will occur at the district level, coinciding with district FNSC meetings when possible, to share annual monitoring results and capture feedback from GOZ, other key stakeholders, and community members. Internal reflection meetings will bring all staff together for two days of teambuilding and reflection on results and learning, emphasizing shared learning from and among Field Officers and integration of best practices and innovations emerging from the field. |

Collaboration with resilience-focused activities. Amalima Loko will ensure all interventions complement public- and donor-funded efforts in the region, such as World Food Program (WFP) Lean Season Assistance activities. Technical leads will participate in Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster meetings and working groups (WFP/UN); national, provincial, and district FNSC meetings (GOZ); NGO Heads of Agency meetings, and a range of USAID meetings, such as semiannual partners meetings, quarterly meetings on humanitarian assistance and resilience, and the Finance Managers Working Group. Harare-based Resilience Advisor Aaron Sudsmo, currently with ZRBF, will provide ongoing links to national forums and exchanges.

### Adaptive Management Approaches

Amalima Loko will instill a culture that recognizes that reporting is not the main reason for project-level data collection and analysis. The value of these data is to determine whether course corrections are needed and what kinds of adaptations might yield better results. Training and mentoring for district and field staff will emphasize this approach, including by adapting CNFA’s one-day basic MEL training that promotes whole-team engagement in M&E.

The Activity’s dynamic communication, sharing, and field-based data entry systems will promote continuous monitoring and quick identification of quality issues. The CLA and M&E team will model and facilitate a range of monitoring approaches and regular feedback cycles—for example, annual surveys and Lot Quality Assurance Sampling for performance indicator monitoring, learning studies to fill knowledge gaps, pilots of new approaches and interventions, and assessments of local context and community needs. The M&E team will help technical teams integrate accurate data into scenario planning for shocks and shifts in context, such as a switch to protective lean season rations and, in times of drought, from Farmer Field Schools to interventions that reduce livestock losses.

Adaptive management in the Refinement Year. Amalima Loko staff at all levels will be engaged in formative research and pilot activities that strengthen their understanding of the local context, drivers of specific behaviors, and the rationale for the ToC and interventions. These activities will reflect the understanding that the ToC is a hypothesis, and increased food access and sustainable watershed management are hypothesized pathways to improved food and nutrition security. Additional testing is required to contextualize interventions to each community’s needs and challenges, ensure responsiveness, and strengthen the ToC. Direct engagement in the refinement process will build the confidence of all Amalima staff in their ability to pursue an adaptive management approach.

### Performance Management Strategies

The M&E Team will refine the customized data management system developed by Amalima for DFSA participant registration and indicator tracking, calculating and reporting M&E results in accordance with the M&E Plan (Annex 9). The Activity will manage performance indicator results and context indicator data in CNFA’s global, cloud-based MEL platform, which complements the field database, provides robust indicator management tools, and integrates analytics and reporting functions. This platform’s accurate performance reports on dynamic dashboards can be shared with partners and authorized stakeholders. This kind of active, ongoing program monitoring will inform decision-making, enabling adjustments that optimize the effectiveness of interventions. In addition, the CNFA Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of Programs lead semi-annual program reviews of performance against M&E targets, budget, and deliverables.

### Monitoring and Adjusting in Response to Unintended Consequences

Amalima Loko will conduct annual GIS mapping to visualize the Activity’s impact on land use and monitor for unintended results. The Community Visioning process, annual external and internal reflection meetings, and participant feedback mechanisms such as comment boxes at food distribution points and the reporting hotline, will provide mechanisms for reporting and discussing unintended consequences, which the Learning Working Group will further explore.

### Safety and Security of Project Staff

Bulawayo-based Operations and Security Manager will collaborate closely with the CNFA home-office security team and security focal points in each Amalima Loko office. She will keep abreast of security threats via the WorldAware alert system and other sources and, as appropriate, will develop plans for mitigating security threats (See Annex 11, Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan*,* for information on staff safety and security).

### Ability to Shift to Humanitarian Response Interventions

CNFA worked closely with FFP to address severe drought seasons during Amalima, mobilizing a lean season protective ration, scaling up CFA, and shifting resources from rainfed agriculture to livestock survival support. Amalima Loko will draw on this experience and those of partners: ORAP’s experience as a WFP implementing partner; IMC’s experience in Matabeleland with USAID/OFDA and in emergency response globally; and recent Mercy Corps experience responding to Cyclone Idai. As a registered NGO in Zimbabwe authorized to implement a Title II program, CNFA is well positioned to shift or scale interventions appropriately, while protecting development gains and prioritizing coordination with and support for other humanitarian actors.

### Leveraging of Existing Investments to Improve Food Security and Nutrition

Amalima Loko will consult with and visit activities being implemented by a range of USAID-funded Activities, such as Farmer-to-Farmer, the regional Resilient Waters Program, and programs that focus on health, youth, and other relevant areas. Technical leads will connect with WFP staff implementing Lean Season Assistance and with GOZ entities, such as the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) and the ZRBF, and participate in coordination bodies that address nutrition, DRR, and resilience.

## Resource Management

The Amalima Loko Commodity Management Unit (described in Section 2.1 and shown on the Organizational Chart in Annex 13) will oversee planning, logistics, and tracking for commodity distributions and CFA activities. The commodities will support the Activity’s BSFP to help prevent malnutrition and promote linear growth in children. Payments to CFA participants will provide vulnerable households a monetary infusion that helps meet their most basic needs. To avoid duplication and meet participants’ changing needs, Amalima Loko will coordinate closely with other feeding programs in the project area—primarily WFP and GOZ social welfare activities.

Food rations. The BSFP will provide rations for pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and CU2 in target areas. CNFA anticipates distributions to 54,647 PLW and 87,994 CU2 unique participants. The BSFP is a non-conditional in-kind transfer; however, mothers and CU2 caregivers will be strongly encouraged to participate in Care Groups and other interventions.

Amalima Loko will use corn soya blend+ (CSB+) and fortified vegetable oil, which supported reductions in stunting from 31.7 to 24.5 percent under Amalima. The caloric benefits of these rations are shown in Figure 2-8. CSB+ is a good source of energy, carbohydrates, protein, fat, and micronutrients. It is fortified with vitamins and minerals, including Vitamins A, D3, E, B, C, and Biotin, iodine, iron, zinc, potassium, calcium, and phosphorous. It is quick to prepare and easy for children to eat and digest. CSB+ has been easily adopted in Amalima target communities. Fortified vegetable oil is a plant-based, calorically dense fat and has Vitamins A and D added.

The Activity will continue the monthly ration size provided by Amalima (see Figure 2-8), in line with WFP recommendations. The Commodity Manager and Food Security Technical Coordinator will continuously monitor markets for food availability and potential market distortions. They will recommend updates to the BSFP as needed, building on the January 2020 USAID Zimbabwe Market Study for Matabeleland North and in compliance with FFPIB 18-03. Commodities for a lean season protective rations have not been calculated but can be mobilized quickly in coordination with USAID and other development actors.

##### FIGURE 2-8: RATION AMOUNTS AND NUTRITIONAL VALUES[[87]](#endnote-88)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Beneficiary and Daily Kcalorie Requirements | Commodity | Ration per Month | Ration per Day | Total Kcalories/Day | Protein | % Provided |
| Pregnant and Lactating Women:  2,718 (pregnant)  2,900 (lactating) | CSB+ | 5.5kg | 183g | 698 | 28g | 25%  24% |
| Vegetable oil | 1.3778kg  (1.5 liters) | 45g | 398 | - | 15%  14% |
| Children Under Age 2:  834 | CSB+ | 3kg | 100g | 381 | 53g | 45% |
| Vegetable Oil | 0.9185kg (1 liter) | 31g | 274 | - | 33% |

Transport and logistics. The Commodity Management Unit will oversee transport and logistics requirements. This team is well-versed in GOZ commodity regulations and USAID requirements for 22 CFR 211 compliance, import permitting, GMO compliance, fumigation, in-land freight arrangements, and commodity disposal procedures. Amalima Loko will coordinate shipments through Durban, South Africa, which has high-quality storage facilities and control measures to minimize losses. The team will review transport arrangements for each call forward, adjusting as appropriate, requesting standard bills of lading for ocean or multimodal transport as needed, and using standard packaging with the USAID logo. The team will request fortified maize meal as a substitute when CSB+ is not available and, in line with WHO guidance, request an increased CSB+ ration size when fortified vegetable oil is not available.

***Distribution sites and security*.** The Activity will distribute rations monthly, with MOHCC health clinics as primary distribution points (see Annex 12, Intervention Area Maps,for clinic locations). For effective reach and safety for remote communities, the Activity will select secondary distribution points with the MOHCC. At least 90 percent of participants will be within 10 km of the distribution site, with distributions in mid-morning so vulnerable women are not on the road late in the day.

Cash transfers or vouchers. Amalima Loko will provide cash transfers to cash-for-assets participants. The rate, designed to be “self-targeting”, will follow GOZ wage guidelines in that it is lower than the normal hourly wage, based on a wage survey for the area This will avoid drawing workers from other productive activities and ensure participants are from poor households. The Activity will seek agreement on the rate with the Department of Social Services in each district and other GOZ and donor-funded programs in the area.

Amalima used a wage of US$2 per day for a 4-hour workday; the Amalima Loko CFA wage will be similar. Households within walking distance (generally 5 km) of the asset site are eligible to have one member participate, with priority to the most vulnerable households if the number of participants exceeds labor demand—an unlikely scenario due to low population density. Amalima Loko expects 15,000 individual CFA participants. In accordance with Amalima best practices and where feasible, the Activity will use mobile money for financial transfers in rural areas. Otherwise, the Activity will use cash-in-transit with a reputable security provider contracted from Bulawayo. Amalima has used mobile money and cash-in-transit for more than $1 million in payments since 2014 without incident.

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15. Figures from the 2010 National Nutrition Survey, 2018 Demographic Health Survey, and 2019 ZimVac Rural Livelihoods Survey. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
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