

AMALIMA LOKO BRIEF

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR CHANGE

The Amalima Loko activity, funded by USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and led by CNFA, is designed to improve food and nutrition security for more than 82,600 vulnerable households across five districts in Zimbabwe's Matabeleland North through increased food access and sustainable watershed management. Amalima Loko decided to use a people-centered approach to guide program planning, implementation, monitoring, and adaptation. From its inception, the team was keen to understand why people, including people at institutional, community and household levels, do or do not practice behaviors that lead to improved food and nutrition security. Amalima Loko recognized that these 'reasons why' – the drivers of behavior change – are not always addressed in projects and can limit achievement of sustained results. While it would require a time commitment, there were benefits to working across technical areas to better understand and address the drivers, to share accountability for expected outcomes, and to bring a clear and logical focus on activities most likely to lead to results. Developed using the JSI Research and Training Institute's (formerly The Manoff Group) *Behavior Integration* systems approach, the behavior-led strategy identifies priority behavioral outcomes as Amalima Loko's development results and aligns all project activities to address the critical drivers, ultimately delivering positive changes in these priority behaviors. By measuring progress along the pathways to change these priority behaviors, Amalima Loko adapts activities based on learning during implementation.

THE DESIRE FOR A STRATEGY THAT PUTS PEOPLE AND THEIR BEHAVIORS AT THE FOREFRONT

"I can see now that changing behaviors of these key people is all of our work and will take everyone's expertise – watershed and natural resources, agriculture and livelihoods, WASH, nutrition, governance, financing – we all need to work together."

— Amalima Loko Technical Coordinator

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONALIZATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Amalima Loko Behavior-led Strategy was developed and operationalized by:

- Identifying priority behaviors, measured as behavioral outcomes, that have the best chance of achieving Amalima Loko's goal of improved food and nutrition security.
- Articulating evidence-based factors (barriers and motivators) that influence each priority behavior.
- Delineating the pathways to change each priority behavior using a Behavior Profile to describe the types of planned activities that address the factors, working with primary actors and supporting actors who play a key role in changing each priority behavior.
- Summarizing the priority behaviors and the pathways to change them into a strategic framework to guide implementation, monitoring, and adaptation, and developing indicators to measure progress along pathways.
- Personalizing the strategy by district and by technical group with all project staff so each group's workplan contains practical and actionable activities that drive change in priority behaviors.
- Assessing progress made on priority behaviors and the pathways to change them, and adapting strategy and activities based on dialogue and consensus.

PRIORITY BEHAVIORS TO ACHIEVE AMALIMA LOKO'S PURPOSES

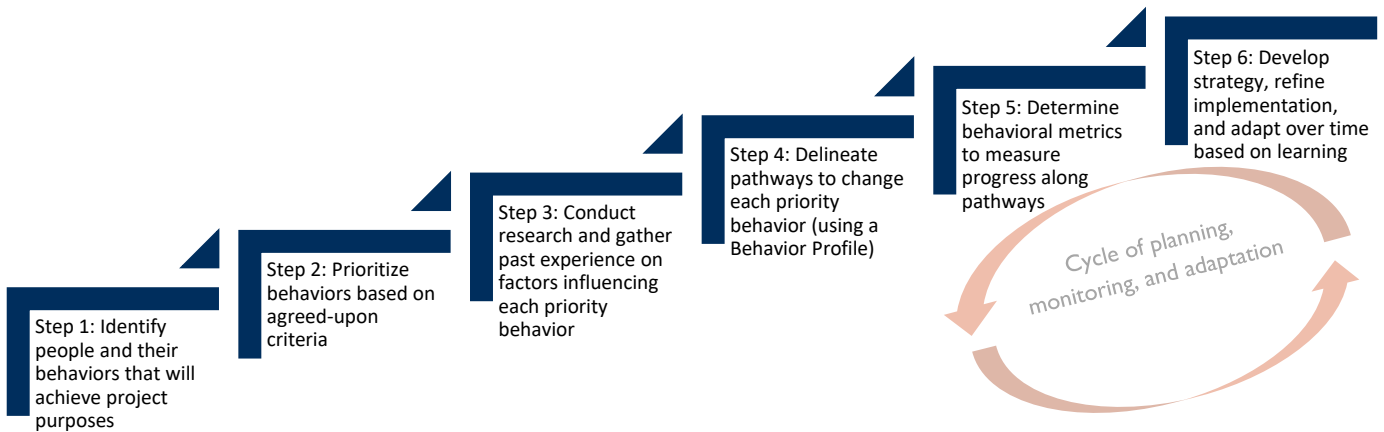


Figure 1: Behavior Integration Overview

Amalima Loko identified key people and their behaviors inhibiting the project purposes of inclusive local ownership, health and availability of natural resources, and human health and livelihoods. Using six criteria, 14 priority behaviors were determined. These priority behaviors are central to the project's theory of change as follows.

Amalima Loko's theory of change, reflected in the project's behavior-led strategy (see Figure 2), posits that to achieve the goal of improved food and nutrition security through increased food access and sustainable watershed management, the project must achieve three purposes: enhance inclusive local ownership over food security and resilience planning and implementation, improve health and availability of soil, water, and plant resources, and improve human health and livelihoods.

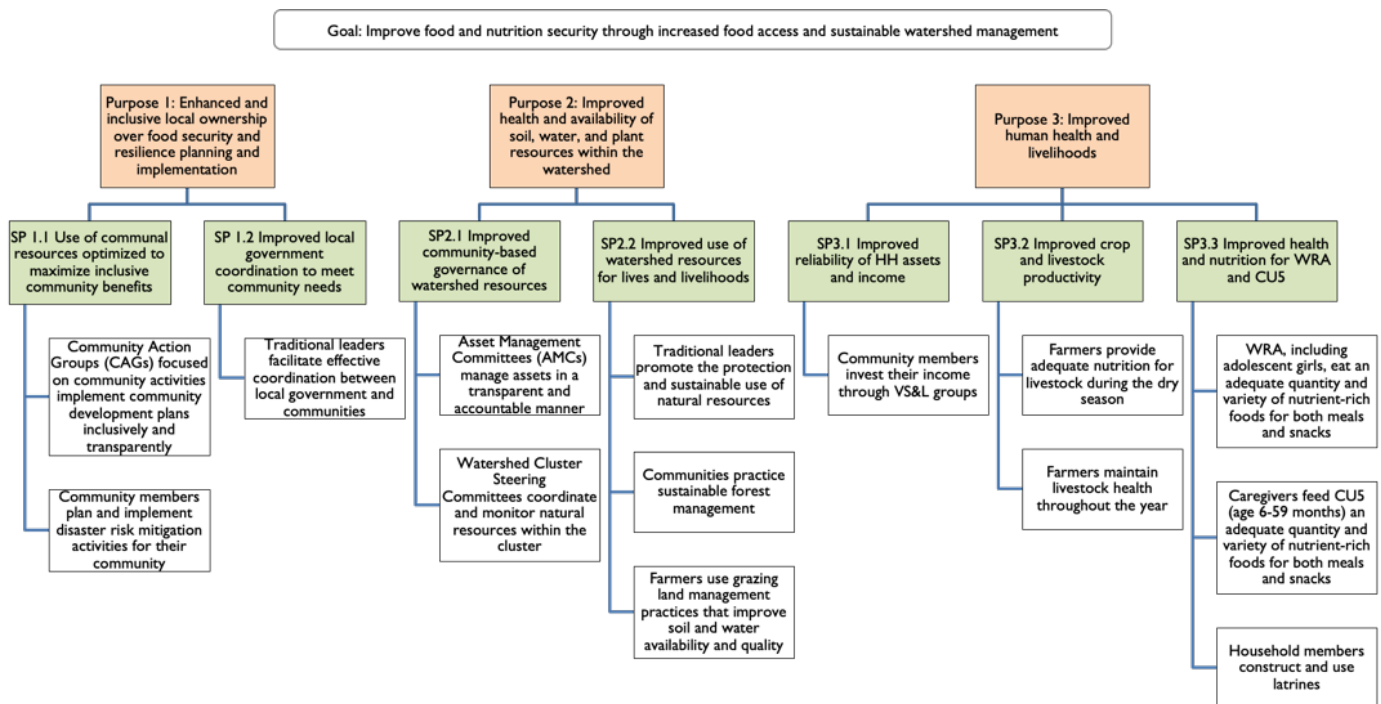


Figure 2 Amalima Loko Strategy based on 14 Priority Behavioral Outcomes

Under **Purpose 1**, to enhance inclusive local ownership, the project is optimizing use of communal resources by ensuring *Priority behavior 1: CAGs focused on community activities implement Village Actions Plans inclusively and transparently* and *Priority behavior 2: Community members plan and implement disaster risk mitigation activities for their community*. The project is also enhancing inclusive local ownership through improved local government coordination by ensuring *Priority behavior 3: Traditional leaders facilitate effective coordination between local government and communities*.

Purpose 2 aims to improve health and availability of soil, water, and plant resources. The project is improving community-based governance of watershed resources by ensuring *Priority behavior 4: AMCs manage assets in a transparent and accountable manner* and *Priority behavior 5: Watershed Cluster Steering Committees coordinate and monitor natural resources*. To improve health and availability of resources, the project is also enhancing the use of watershed resources by ensuring that *Priority behavior 6: Traditional leaders promote the protection and sustainable use of natural resources*, *Priority behavior 7: Communities practice sustainable forest management*, and *Priority behavior 8: Farmers use grazing land management practices*.

Lastly, **Purpose 3** aims to improve human health and livelihoods by focusing on improving reliability of household assets and income. This is achieved by ensuring *Priority behavior 9: Community members invest their income through VS&L groups* and improving crop and livestock productivity by ensuring *Priority behavior 10: Farmers provide adequate nutrition for livestock during the dry season* and *Priority behavior 11: Farmers maintain livestock health throughout the year*. Purpose 3 is also improving health and nutrition for WRA and CU5 by ensuring *Priority behavior 12: WRA eat an adequate quantity and variety of nutrient-rich foods for both meals and snacks*, *Priority behavior 13: Caregivers feed CU5 an adequate quantity and variety of nutrient-rich foods for both meals and snacks*, and *Priority behavior 14: Household members construct and use latrines*.

Once the project identified these priority behaviors, Amalima Loko then mapped pathways from the priority behavior to factors driving behavior change (both barriers and motivators) to supporting actors and the actions needed to enable change, and finally to the range of planned activities. An online *Behavior Integration* tool called a Behavior Profile was used to delineate these pathways.

SUMMARY OF PATHWAYS TO CHANGE PRIORITY BEHAVIORS

Moving the needle on these priority behaviors requires addressing the factors preventing practice of these behaviors and leveraging the motivations that exist to practice these behaviors. Amalima Loko designed research and collected past evidence to understand these factors. The factors included structural factors, primarily the local availability and accessibility of products, supplies and service and inclusive and accountable community governance, including traditional structures; social factors such as intra-family dialogue and shared decision-making, a heightened sense of collective responsibility and ownership for communal assets and their management, and inclusive gender and social norms particularly toward women and youth’s participation; and internal factors such as acquisition of skills for new processes and activities, a sense of agency and optimism to make changes, a perceived benefit of community-led and implemented activities, and valuing natural resources and the ability to manage them (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Synopsis of Factors Driving Behavior Change

Structural Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local availability and accessibility of products, supplies and services Accountable community governance, including traditional structures
Social Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intra-family dialogue and shared decision-making Sense of collective responsibility and ownership for communal assets and their management Inclusive gender and social norms toward women and youth participation
Internal Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of skills for new processes & activities Perceived benefit of community-led and implemented activities Value for natural resources and ability to manage Sense of agency among women and youth Sense of optimism for the future

Figure 4. Synopsis of Supporting Actors Necessary to Enable Behavior Change

Institutional Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional leaders, extension workers, local government such as Rural Development Council Cultivate relationship through open and constant engagement and coaching
Community Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community action group leaders, lead farmers, lead mothers, youth leaders, male champions Train each group on activities and processes related to their mandate Ensure sustained motivation to act through linkages (supervision, resources, recognition) within community and with local government
Household Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family: Husbands, grandmothers, in-laws Expose each to activities that promote specific supportive behaviors

To effectively address these factors, in some cases, requires working with a variety of supporting actors, whose actions must change to make a difference in a factor that influences the primary actor’s behavior. These supporting actors may be at an institutional level (primarily district or regional), community level (leaders of formal and non-formal groups) or in the household (see Figure 4). For Amalima Loko, working with supporting actors such as traditional leaders and community committee leaders is a first step to realizing change.

Amalima Loko implements a variety of activities that address the factors, working with supporting actors where needed. These activities, described in broad terms in the strategy, are related to the Enabling Environment such as building community capacity for coordination, planning, mobilization, monitoring, and recognition; Resources and Services such as enhancing availability of products,

fostering household investment in income generating activities, and improved service delivery; and Demand Generation and Appropriate Use such as advocacy, community engagement and communication (see Figure 5).

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND NARRATIVE

Amalima Loko developed a strategic framework by summarizing the common factors, supporting actors and activities across the 14 priority behaviors, ensuring that every activity is part of a logical pathway that explains why it is implemented.

The behavior-led strategy illuminates, in summary form, what the key factors are that influence priority behaviors, which supporting actors must be engaged to change the priority behaviors, and how Amalima Loko is addressing the factors influencing the priority behaviors through well-designed and focused activities layered across the project purposes, sequenced at the right time, and integrated across the project teams to maximize results. The strategy narrative, framework, and annexes provide further details.

Figure 5. Synopsis Of Activities to Address Factors, working with Supporting Actors

Enabling Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach community leaders on governance, inclusion, resource management Develop community-led bylaws Create market linkages and facilitate access
Systems, Products and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Learn by doing together” model for assessments, asset development and management Construct and/or rehabilitate water assets Support value chain providers with inputs
Demand and Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support communities to celebrate progress Support communities to promote voices and leadership opportunities for women and youth Support ownership and pride in assets developed and managed by the community

OPERATIONALIZING THE STRATEGY

Amalima Loko is operationalizing this strategy by:

- Working with all staff, organized by district and technical group, to develop their personalized strategy articulating their behavioral focus, the critical factors to address in their specific district based on their experience to date, and the activities they implement that address those factors (see Figure 6)
- Designing each activity in the workplan, thinking creatively about how to address the factors shown on its pathway, working together to brainstorm, design and test activities.
- Implementing each activity based on the personalized strategy for each district and technical group, and the activity design determined by the team.
- Collecting data along the pathways to change priority behaviors. The indicators include priority behavioral outcome indicators to measure each of the 14 priority behaviors, selected factor indicators on the pathways identified in behavior profiles, and activity output indicators.
- Assessing progress on each priority behavioral outcome and selected pathways to determine if activity output indicators are leading to improvements in factor indicators which in turn are leading to improvements in priority behavioral outcome indicators. Amalima Loko aims to learn about what is working and what is not, and then adapt plans during the course of implementation.

“The logic of our work is clear. For each activity, we can tell you which priority behavior we are working on, what the barriers and motivators are, and what we are doing in the field to overcome these.”

- Amalima Loko Team Member

My Goal: Outline implemented activities to achieve positive change in priority behaviors, by addressing factors that prevent or support behavior change.

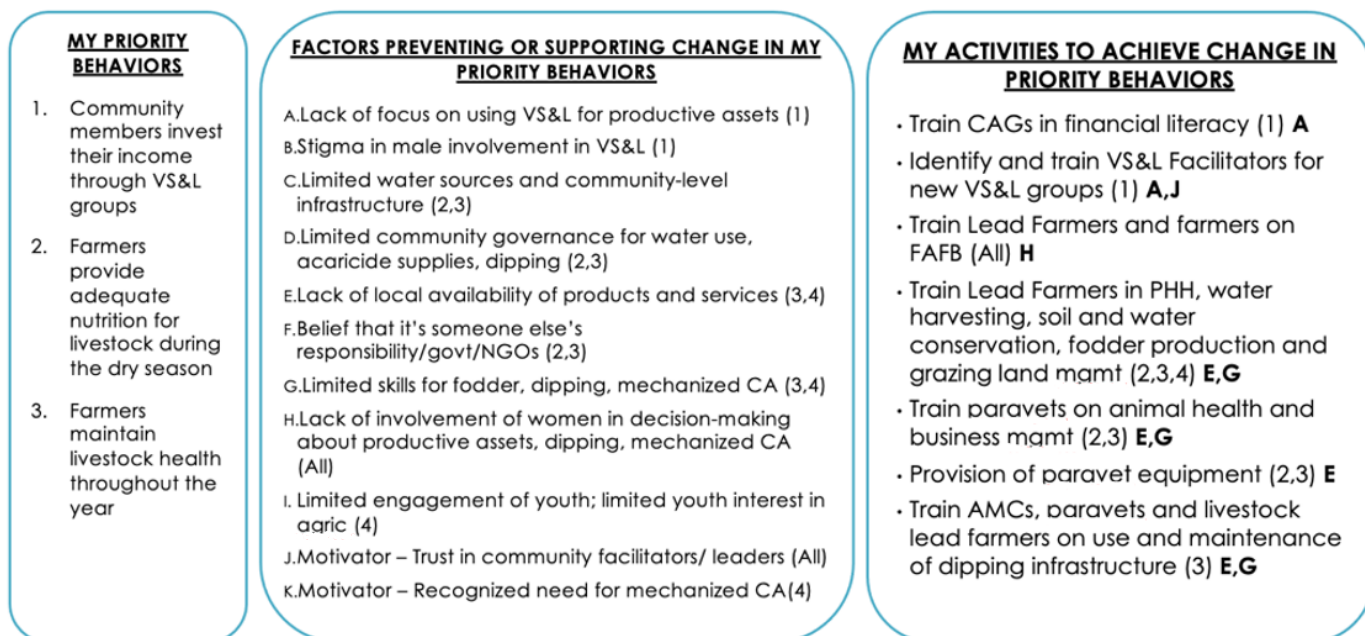


Figure 6. Sample Hwange Personalized Strategy: Agriculture and Livelihoods