

Refine & Implement in Action

RFSA Refinements



The refinement period of the Refine and Implement (R&I) model provides resilience food security activities (RSFAs) an opportunity to refine their design and implementation strategies prior to large-scale implementation. PCS helps RSFAs to identify, document, and articulate proposed refinements based on their learning efforts. At the Culmination Workshop, which concludes the refinement period, RSFAs and BHA discuss the findings from their research and agree on what refinements are necessary.

Types of refinements RSFAs may identify:

Changes to activity design:

- Full sub-purpose or intermediate outcome level pathways or outcomes eliminated
- Outcomes shift to an external actors
- Assumptions found to be incorrect

Changes to implementation strategy:

- Interventions eliminated
- Interventions prioritized
- Interventions substantially modified

RFSA Spotlight: Amalima Loko

Amalima Loko, a RFSA in Zimbabwe, demonstrates how thorough preparation and evidence-based refinements lead to effective culmination discussions. Three main factors contributed to this success.

91%

of Culmination Workshop evaluation respondents reported reaching agreement on key modifications to the RFSA design and implementation plans

98%

of Culmination Workshop evaluation respondents were satisfied with the collaboration and coordination between the IP and BHA

Learning Efforts

- **Community consultations:** Their many open-ended discussions with communities helped break down barriers and allowed for deeper insights into the communities' true challenges and aspirations.
- **Technical assessments:** Geospatial mapping and site assessments gave a solid foundation for activities and was especially useful when COVID-19 limited access to communities.
- **In-depth qualitative attitude and behavior studies:** Studies like the Natural Resource Management Barriers and Motivations Study and Institutional Dynamics Assessment, when triangulated with community consultations, enabled Amalima Loko to design activities for sustained behavior change.

PCS Technical Support: BHA participants emphasized that Amalima Loko came to the workshop very prepared thanks, in part, to PCS' effective pre-culmination support. One Amalima Loko support staff member shared:

"The PCS team's availability and willingness to jump in to support us with all of our questions, requests, dry runs was really excellent. Bringing lessons learned from other workshops was really appreciated... Working through this preparation process with PCS added a lot of value... especially because PCS was very flexible and supportive when there were areas where we wanted to make modifications that worked for our team."

Pre-Workshop Preparation & Engagement:

Amalima Loko shared its study summaries and prioritized refinements with BHA ahead of the workshop and held several briefings with BHA to review study findings. Consequently, BHA arrived at the Culmination Workshop well informed and with fewer questions, maximizing the time available to discuss outstanding issues and reach agreement.

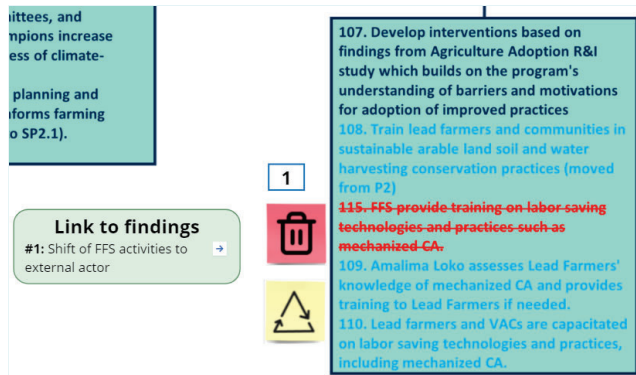
Take a look at some of the resulting refinements

ELIMINATE

Farmer Field Schools

Findings: Support for dryland cropping was not prioritized by communities during the visioning process. The Government's Intwasa Conservation Agriculture (CA) program for dryland crop production provides vast coverage and free inputs. In 2020-21, 88% of households surveyed received free inputs and 82% received training.

Sources: Community Visioning Assessment, Agriculture Assessment, Observations



SHIFT TO EXTERNAL ACTOR

Conservation agriculture training and inputs

PRIORITIZE

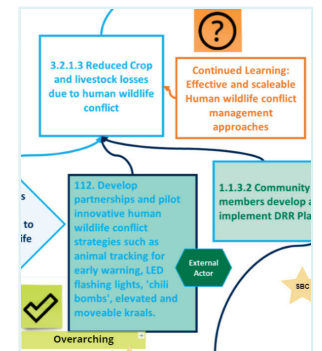
Human wildlife conflict management

Findings:

- Human wildlife conflict (HWC) was a huge priority for communities.
- HWC leads to heavy crop and livestock losses and affects intra-household dynamics.
- The stress and time involved in managing HWC limits the scope for expanding livelihood options.
- Communities lack effective tools, resources, and support to address HWC.

Sources:

- Gender, Youth, and Social Dynamics Study
- Natural Resource Management Study
- Community Visioning Assessment
- Agriculture Assessment



What makes for quality refinements?



When a clear **link** exists between the research question, the findings, and the resulting refinement. The link helps justify the proposed refinement.



When refinements are based on **new or surprising** data from the learning. The refinement should not be based on the team's existing knowledge.



When strong **triangulation** between findings is demonstrated. This includes triangulating across studies as well as triangulating primary data with secondary data and contextual analyses.

What makes for a successful Culmination Workshop?

Advanced Engagement

Sharing full study reports or hosting calls to discuss study findings **in advance of the workshop**

Efficient Workshop Discussions

Clearly **justifying** proposed refinements with research findings

Clear Follow-Up

Identifying specific areas that require **follow-up** discussions before coming to agreement

Focusing on **critical** questions to determine general agreement on refinements