Finding Our Focus and Establishing Priorities for Obesity Solutions

Roundtable on Obesity Solutions

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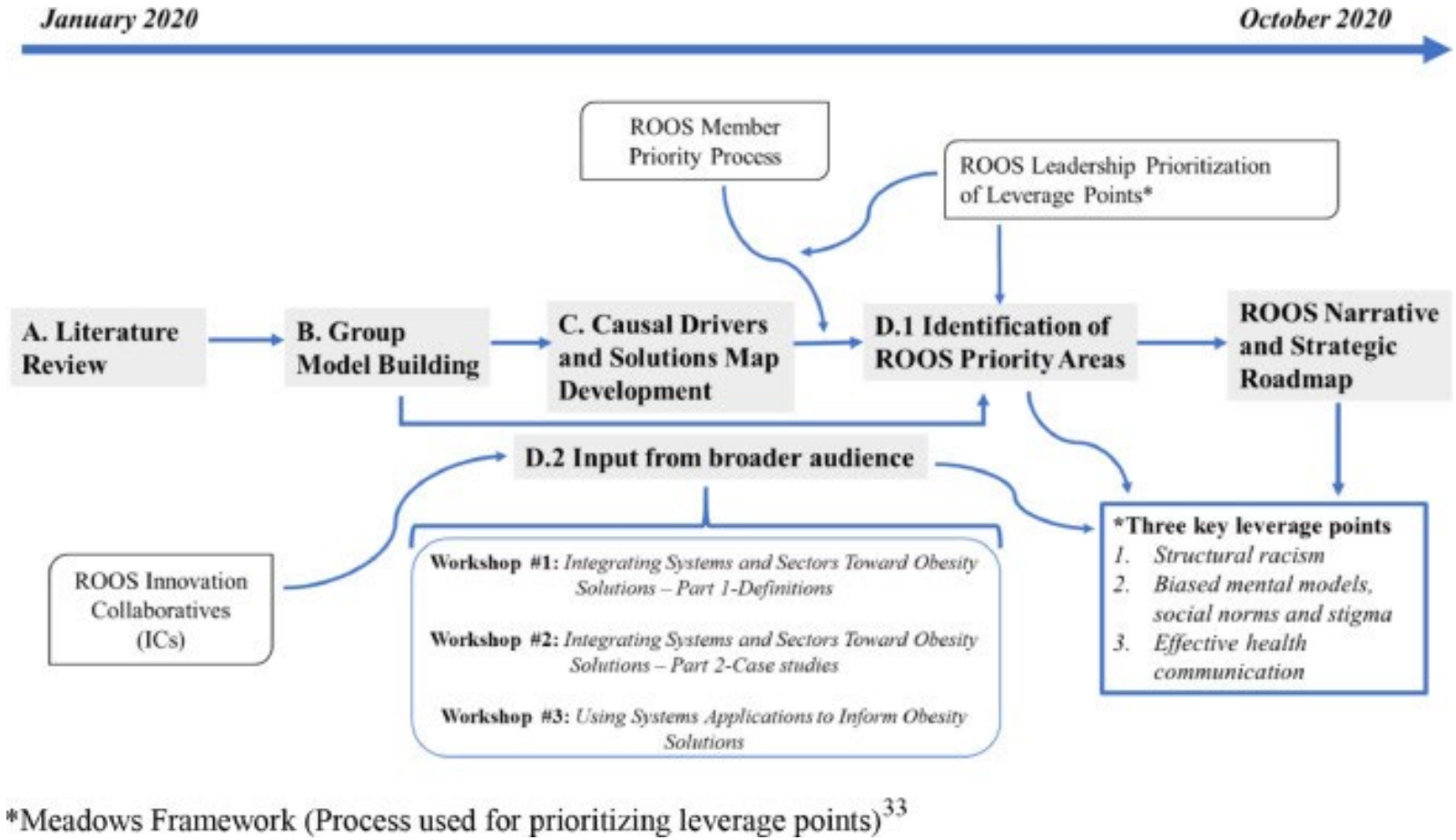
In 2019 we….

- Recognized the need and various “calls” to adopt a multi-sector systems perspective and apply that perspective to advance, scale, and spread effective solutions
- Attempted to drive a paradigm shift in the way we think about and address obesity risk and prevention strategies
- Developed a 5-year strategic plan to address obesity

Using systems science methods to build a strategic plan



*Meadows Framework (Process used for prioritizing leverage points)[33]

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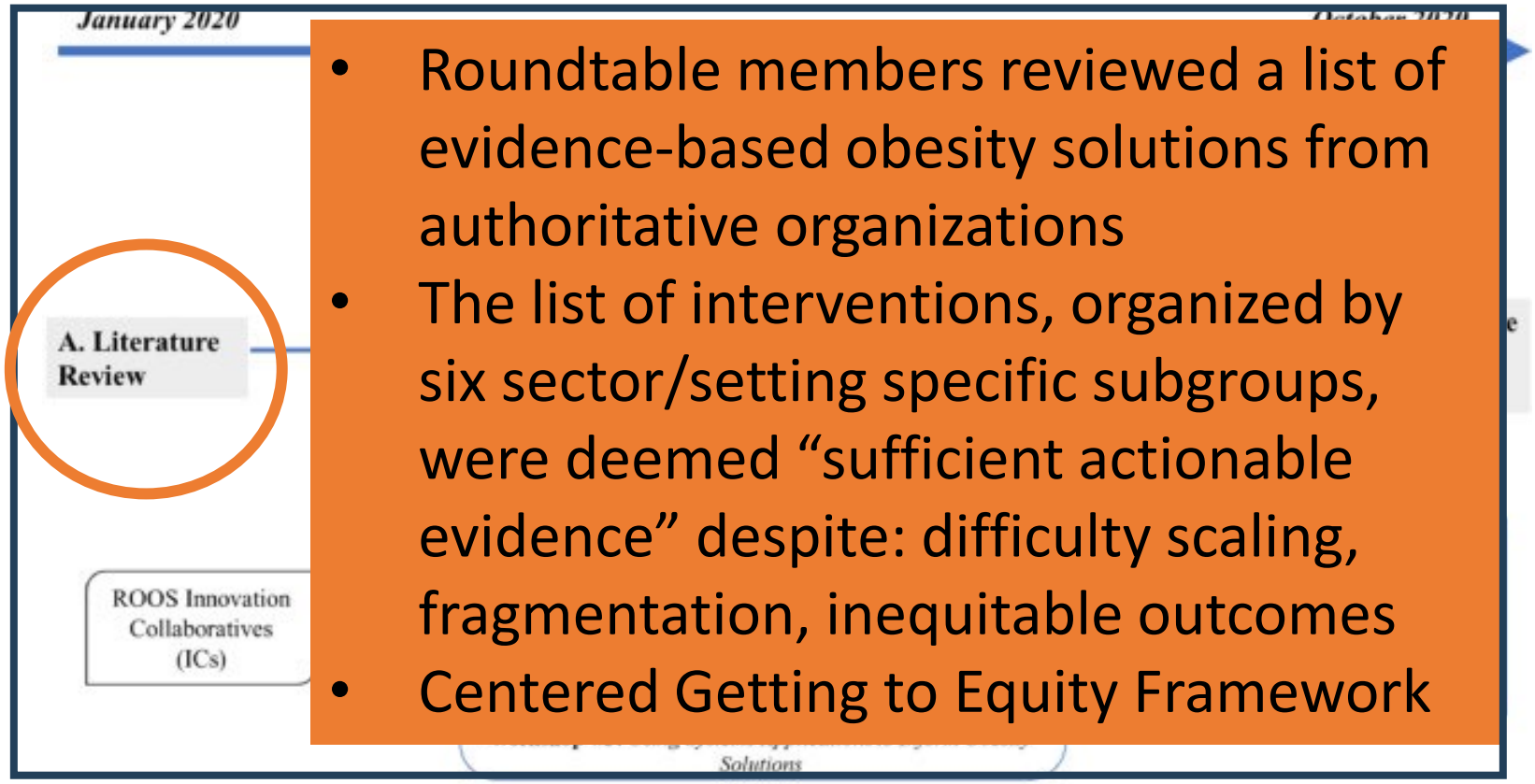
Building Trust

- Over the year, the Roundtable leadership heard from its members and equalized their input to build trust and foster equitable dialogue.
- The Roundtable membership represents a variety of sectors (e.g. academia, business, philanthropy, government, lived experience), so group impact was important as well as individual member engagement.
- Interactive exercises (some anonymous) were completed to provide an opportunity to share individual concerns and solidify member trust and engagement.

Using of systems science methods to build a strategic plan



- Roundtable members reviewed a list of evidence-based obesity solutions from authoritative organizations
- The list of interventions, organized by six sector/setting specific subgroups, were deemed “sufficient actionable evidence” despite: difficulty scaling, fragmentation, inequitable outcomes
- Centered Getting to Equity Framework

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- Shift toward deeper determinants
- Pivoting from single solutions or single sector-based solutions to the complex entirety and how the variables interact
- Helped the group understand the need to identify structural drivers
- COVID-19 exacerbated inequities

Getting to equity

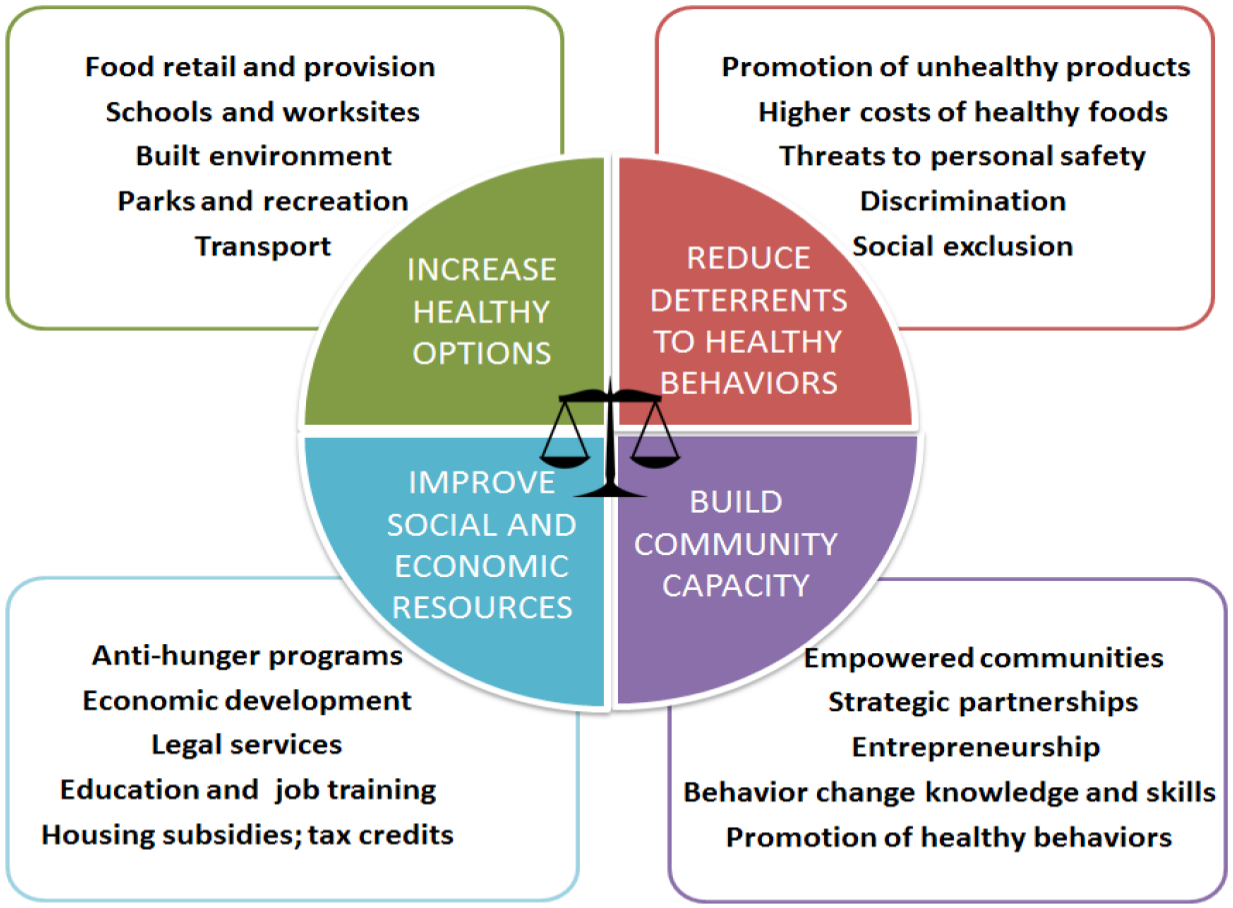

Figure 2 | Proposed equity-oriented obesity prevention action framework to assist in selecting or evaluating combinations of interventions that incorporate considerations related to social disadvantage and social determinants of health.

Kumanyika SK. Am J Public Health. 2019 Oct;109(10):1350-1357

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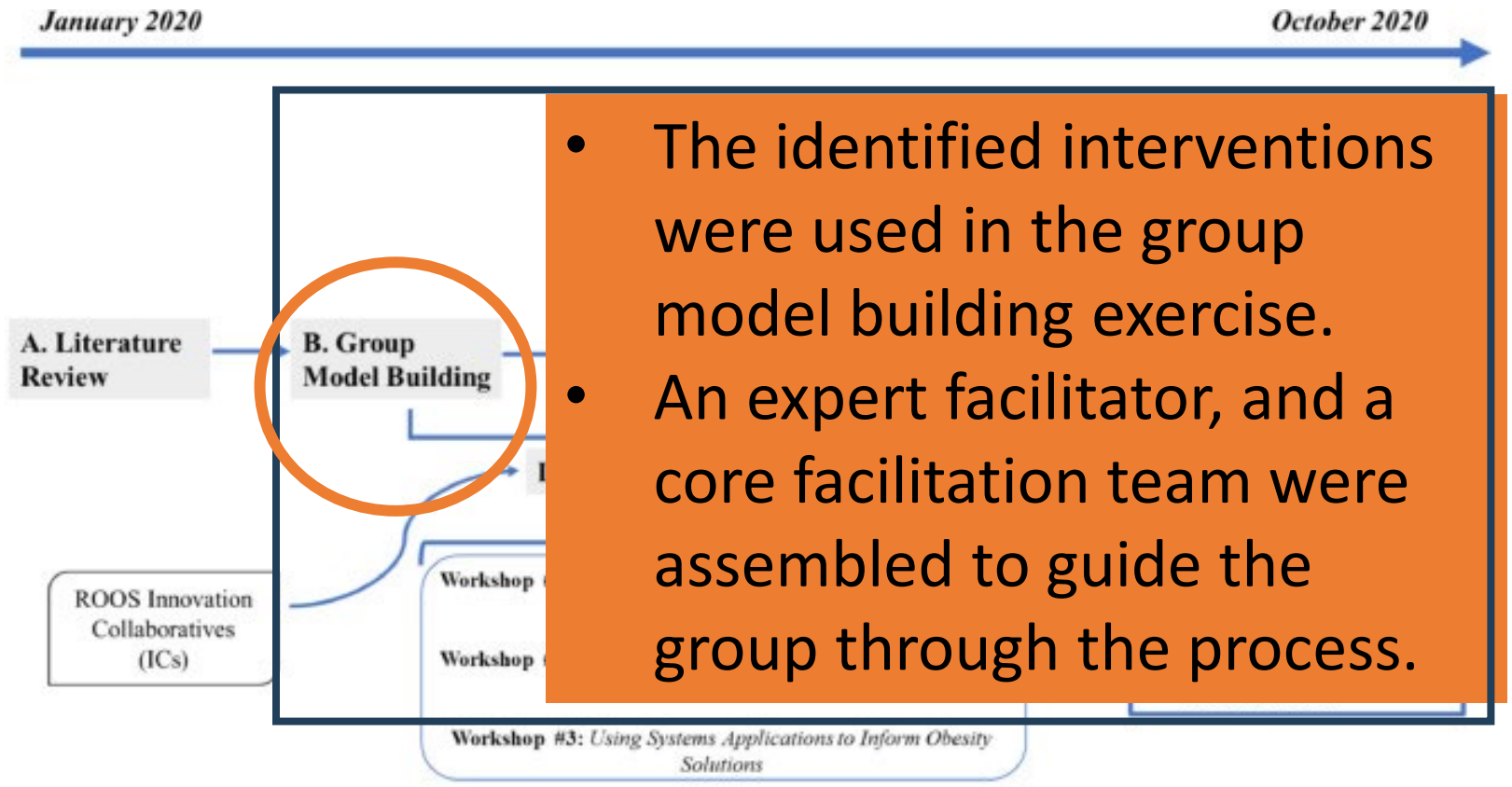

- The identified interventions were used in the group model building exercise.
- An expert facilitator, and a core facilitation team were assembled to guide the group through the process.

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ROOS Group Model Building Process

Core model building team:

- Peter S. Hovmand, Ph.D., M.S.W., Larissa Calancie, Ph.D., Melanie Houston, M.S.W.

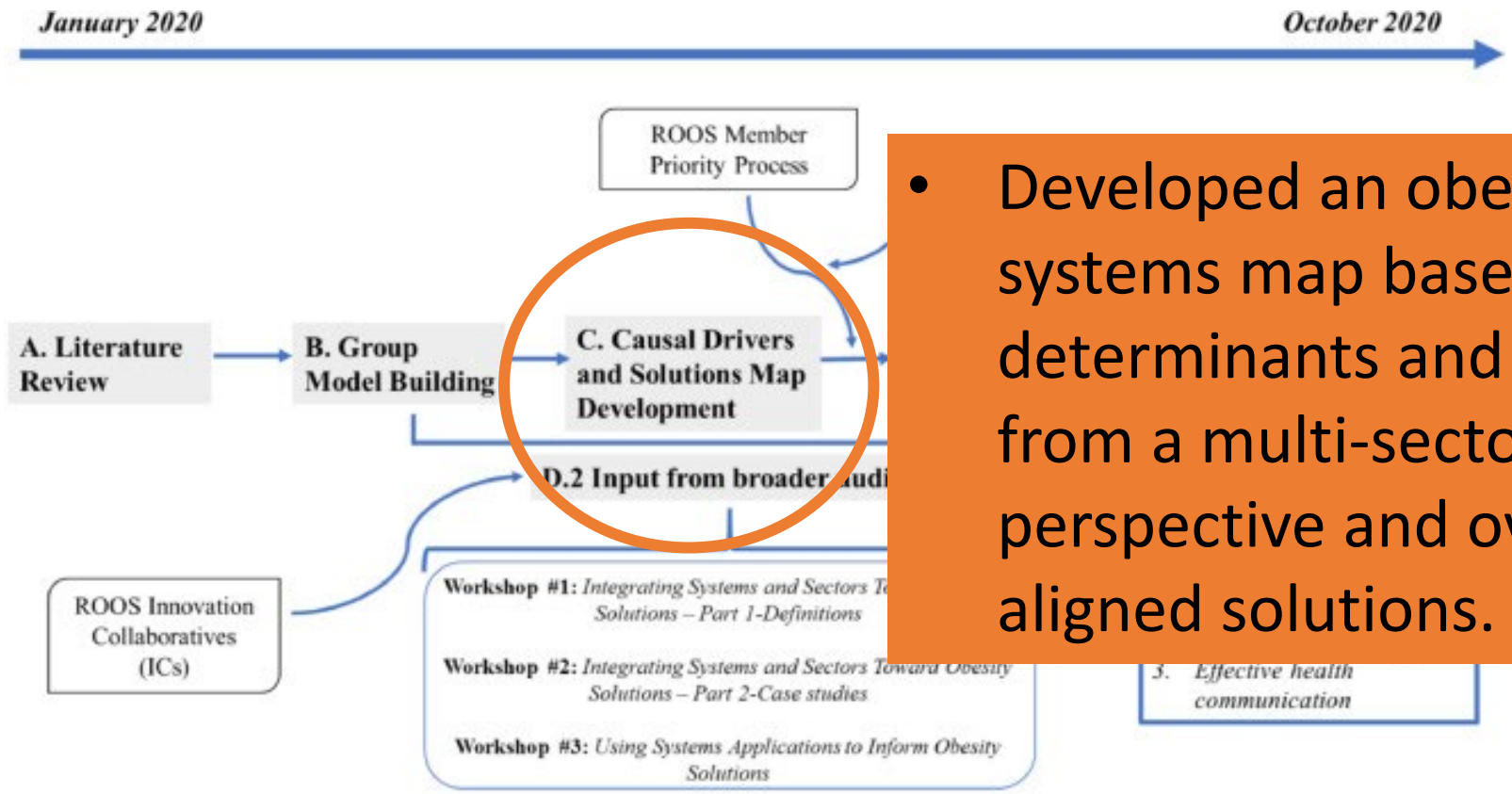
Group model building session:

1. Introduction to systems thinking and concepts
2. “Hopes and Fears”
3. “Graphs Over Time”
4. “Dots Exercise
5. “Casual Mapping” in small groups
6. “Model Review - reflecting on the systems map, process and model-based insights

Products:

- Preliminary drivers to populate a causal loop diagram
- Meeting summary and narrative to describe the process, outcomes, and next steps.

Using systems science methods to build a strategic plan



- Developed an obesity systems map based on determinants and drivers from a multi-sector perspective and overlaid with aligned solutions.

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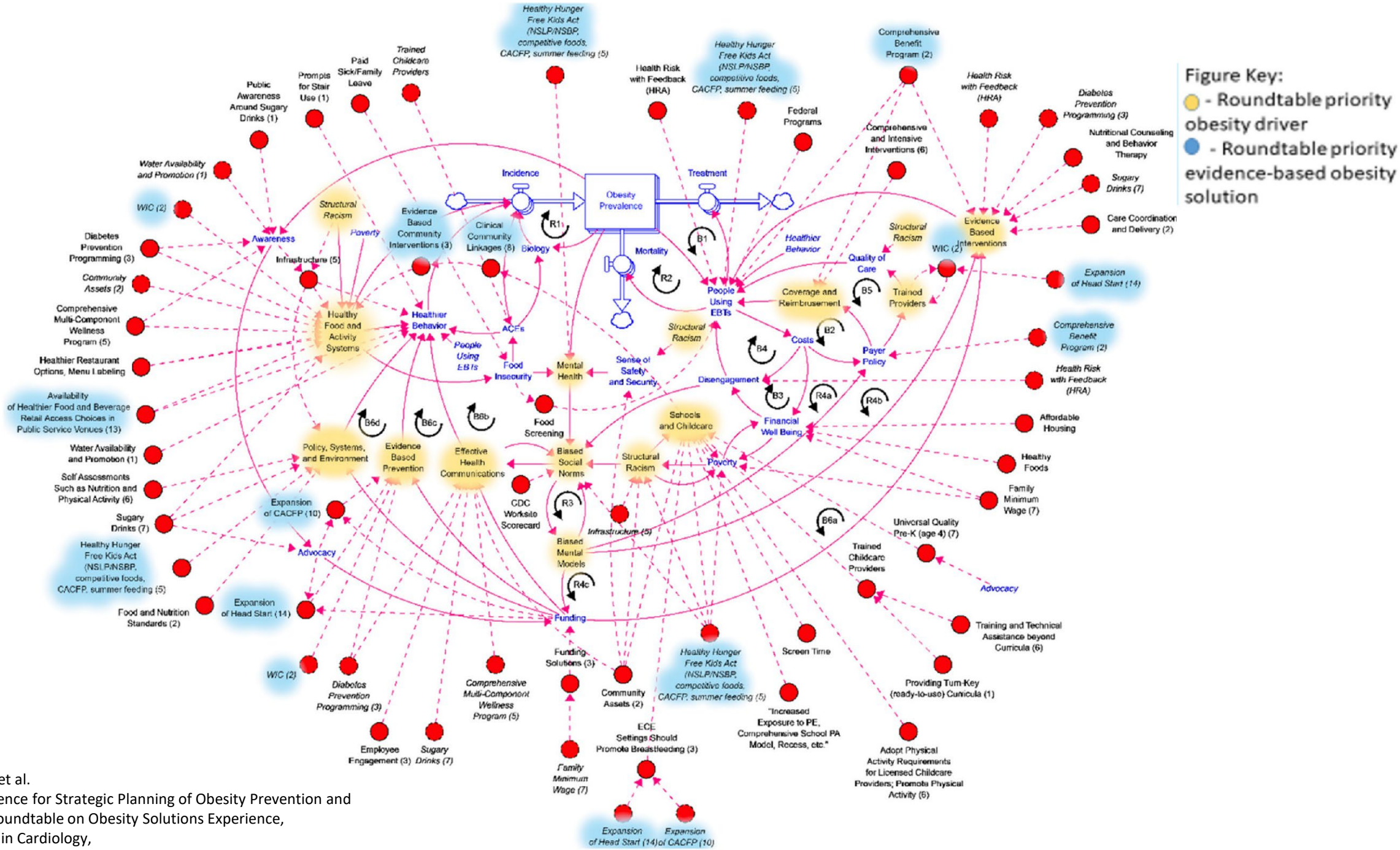

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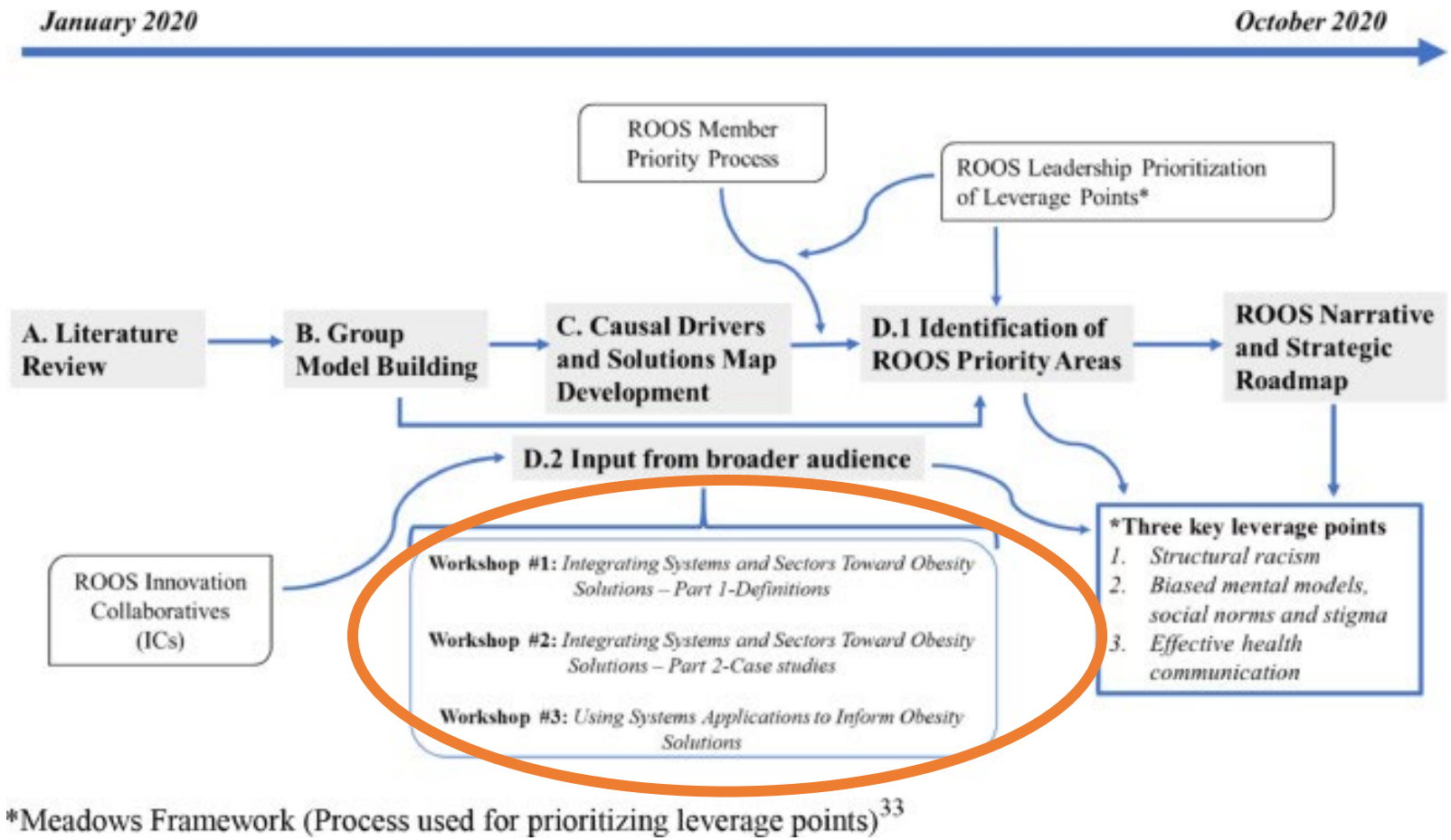

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Integrating Systems and Sectors Toward Obesity Solutions: A Workshop (April/June 2020)

- Provided background on systems theories, methodologies, and applications.

- Addressed systems and the context for obesity, influencing systems, and examples from the field.
  - Explored how systems and contributing factors like inequity (i.e. social determinants), power dynamics, relationships, and capacity affect systems that can influence obesity, and how they can impact effective communications and cross-sector collaboration.

Using Systems Applications to Inform Obesity Solutions: A Workshop (September 2020)

- Explored the applications of systems science to better understand and address obesity.

- Highlighted the real-world use of systems applications to explore how they can be used in the field of obesity and why systems applications can be valuable for different stakeholders (e.g., communities, private sector, policy makers).

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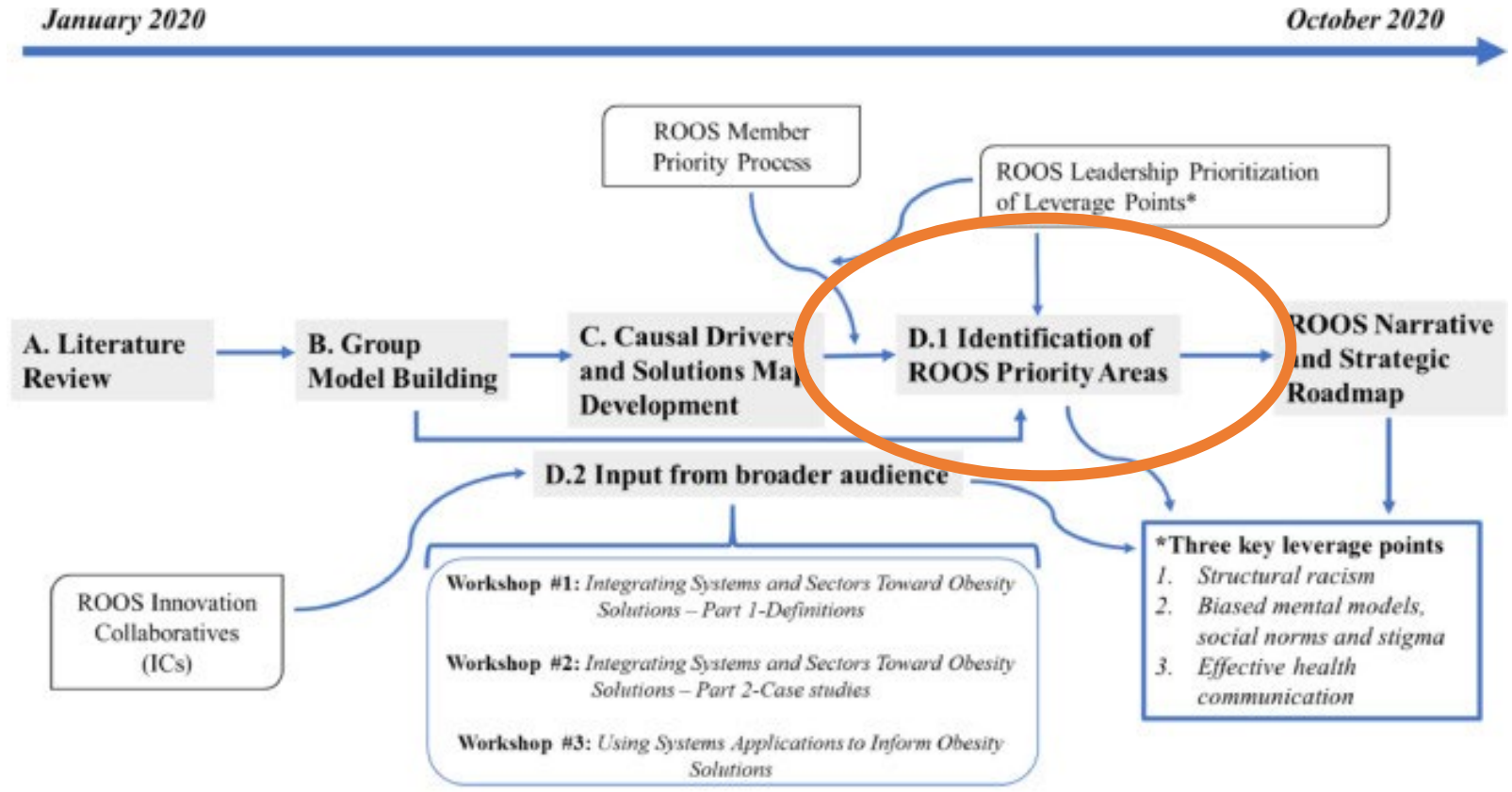

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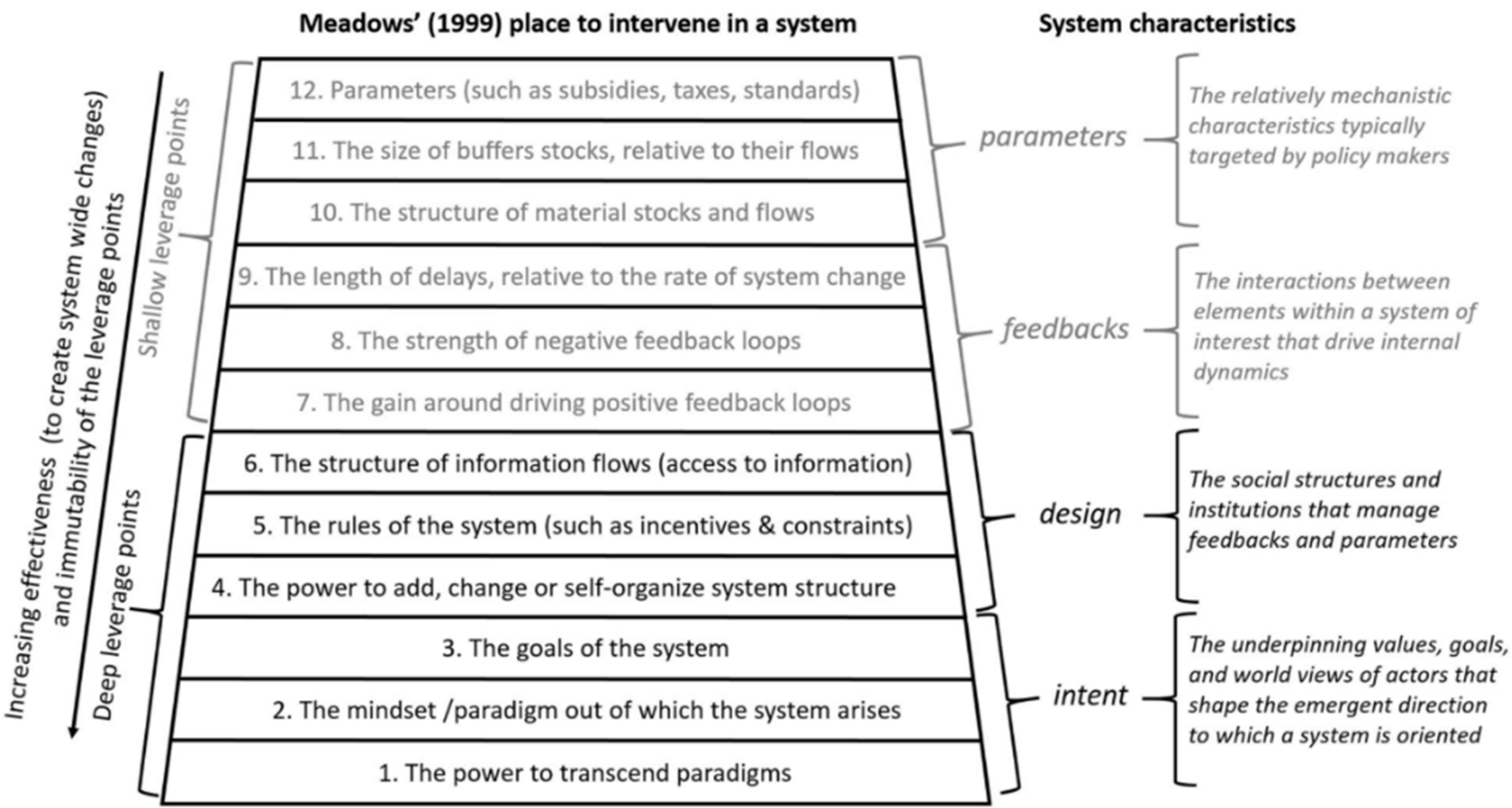
Meadows' (1999) place to intervene in a system
System characteristics
12. Parameters (such as subsidies, taxes, standards)
11. The size of buffers stocks, relative to their flows
10. The structure of material stocks and flows
9. The length of delays, relative to the rate of system change
8. The strength of negative feedback loops
7. The gain around driving positive feedback loops
6. The structure of information flows (access to information)
5. The rules of the system (such as incentives & constraints)
4. The power to add, change or self-organize system structure
3. The goals of the system
2. The mindset /paradigm out of which the system arises
1. The power to transcend paradigms
Shallow leverage points
Deep leverage points
Increasing effectiveness (to create system wide changes) and immutability of the leverage points
parameters
The relatively mechanistic characteristics typically targeted by policy makers
feedbacks
The interactions between elements within a system of interest that drive internal dynamics
design
The social structures and institutions that manage feedbacks and parameters
intent
The underpinning values, goals, and world views of actors that shape the emergent direction to which a system is oriented

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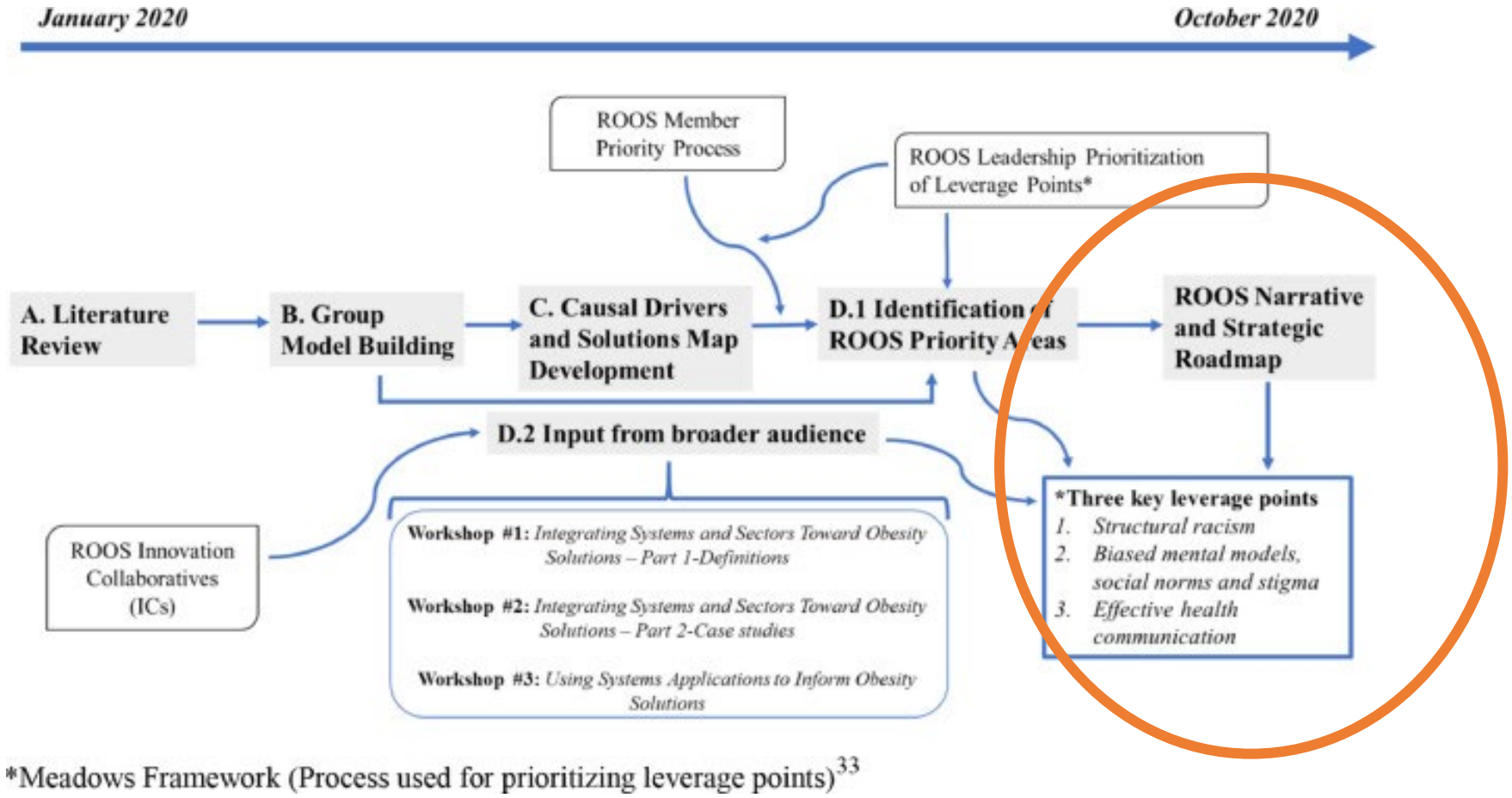

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Most significant leverage points to address obesity with impact

1) Structural racism and social justice
2) Biased mental models and social norms
3) Effective health communications

Complementary to the mission, vision, and guiding principles of the ROOS, the obesity systems map, and narrative roadmap drove the ROOS activities over the next 4 years and served as a resource for researchers, organizations, and institutions involved with policy, prevention, and treatment of obesity.

Thank you!