

*AEA Annual Conference
14 September 2019
Minneapolis, MN*



**Evaluation and Adaptive Learning
to Support Innovation in
International Development,
Systems Thinking.**

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Systems Change

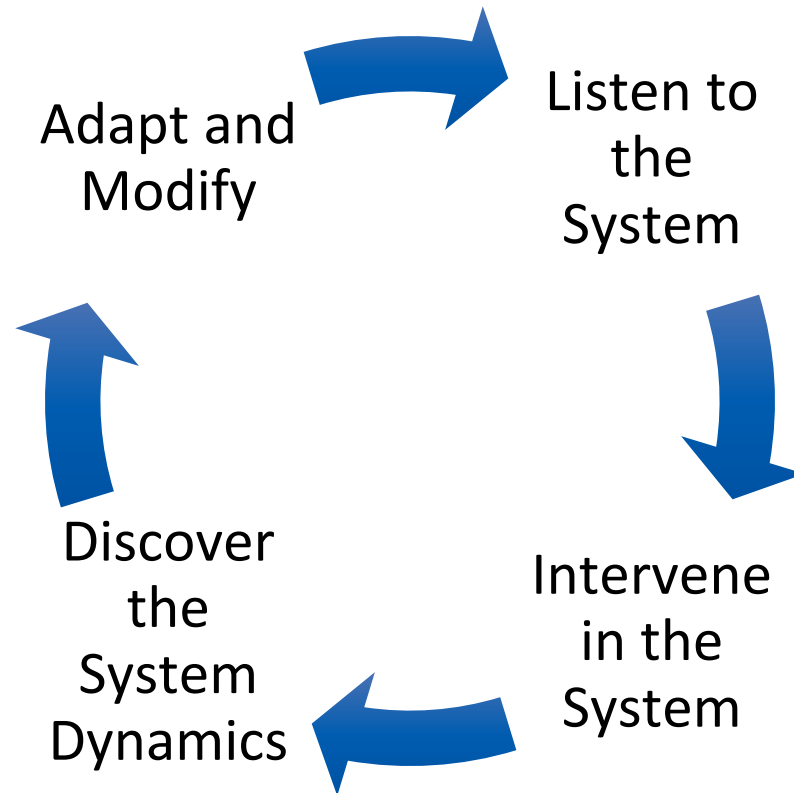
Systems change is:

*“shifting the conditions
that are holding the problem
in place”*

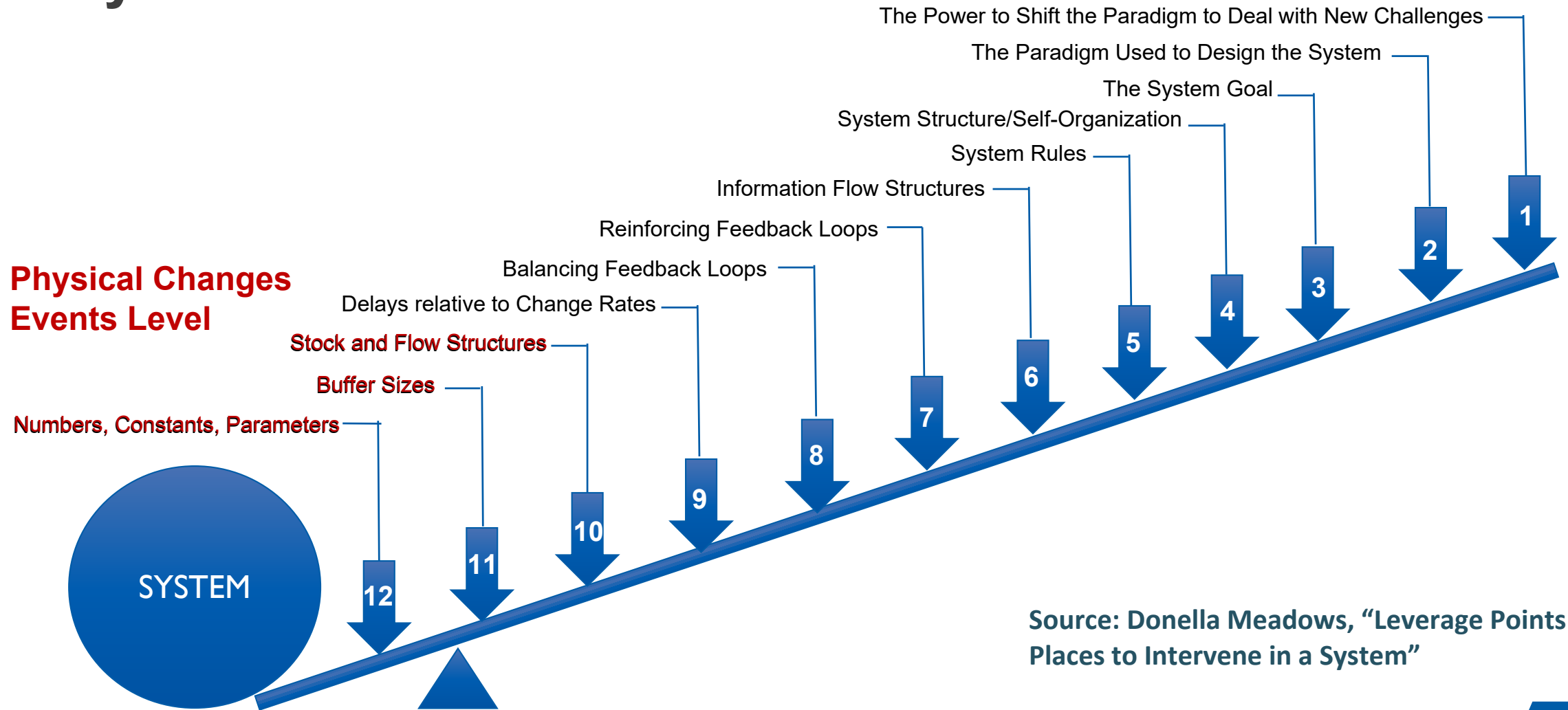
Source: Social Innovation Generation
<http://www.sigeneration.ca/>

Generating Systemic Practices

- The Cycle / Process

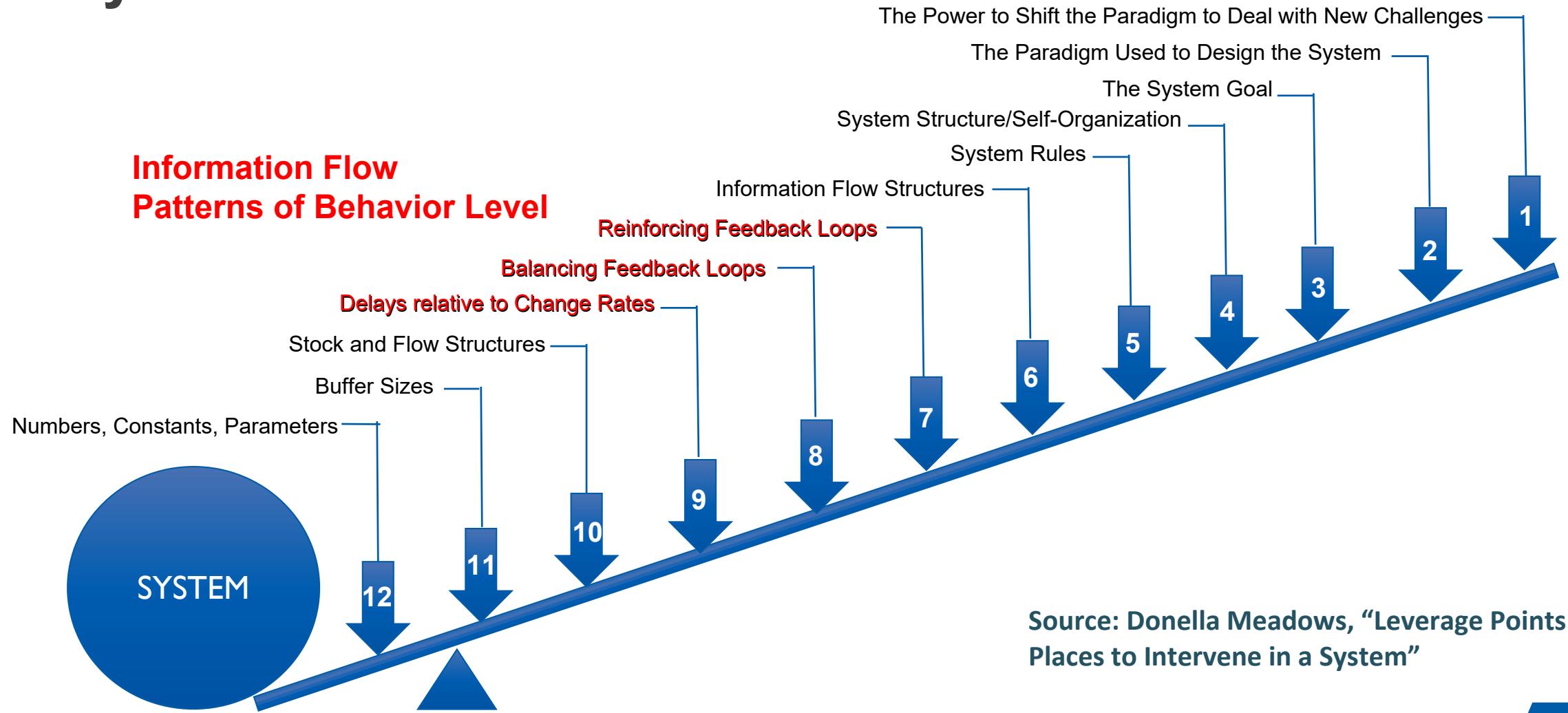


Twelve Leverage Points in Systems



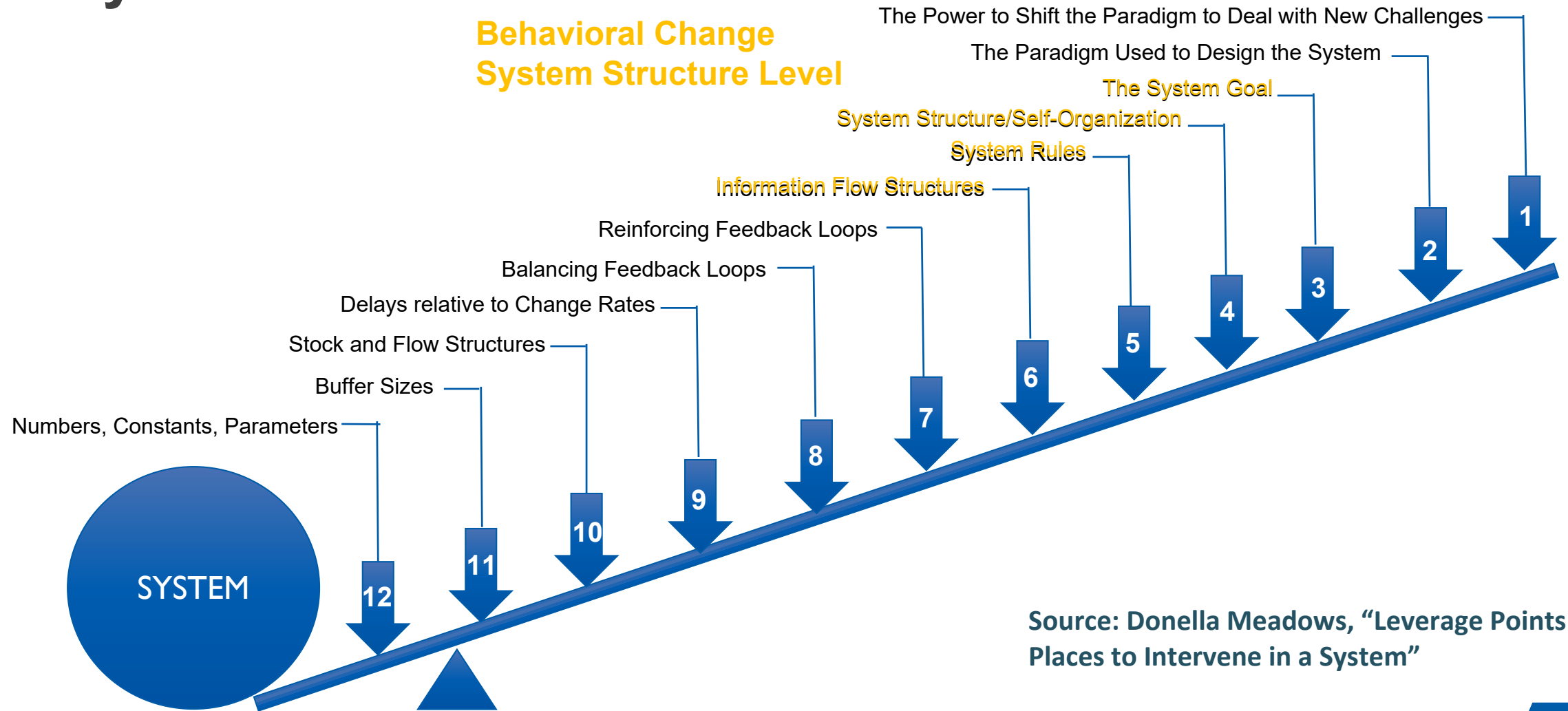
Source: Donella Meadows, "Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System"

Twelve Leverage Points in Systems



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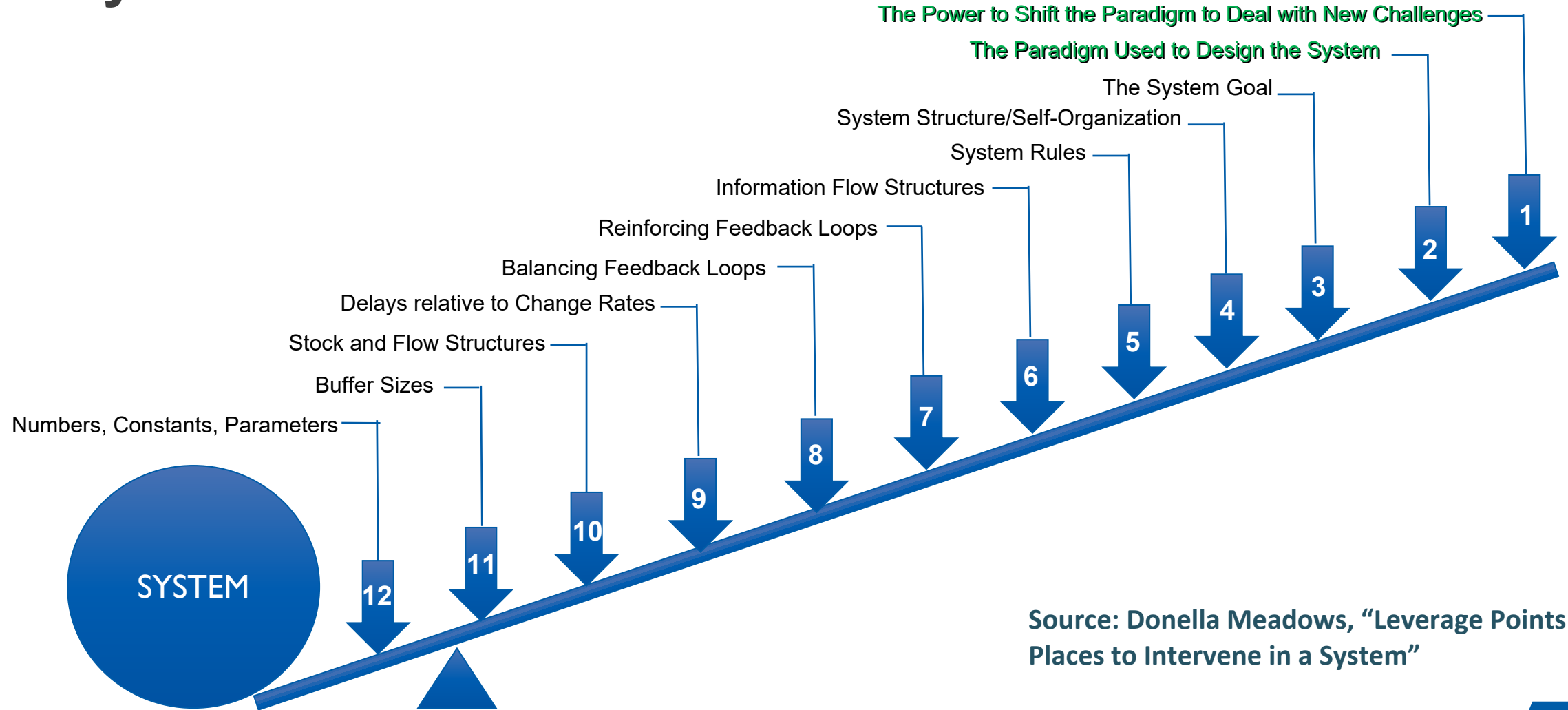
Twelve Leverage Points in Systems



Source: Donella Meadows, "Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System"

Twelve Leverage Points in Systems

Mindset Change
Mental Model Level



Source: Donella Meadows, "Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System"

Patterns and Structures

Events/Symptoms

What happened?
Visible examples of a problem

Patterns/Trends

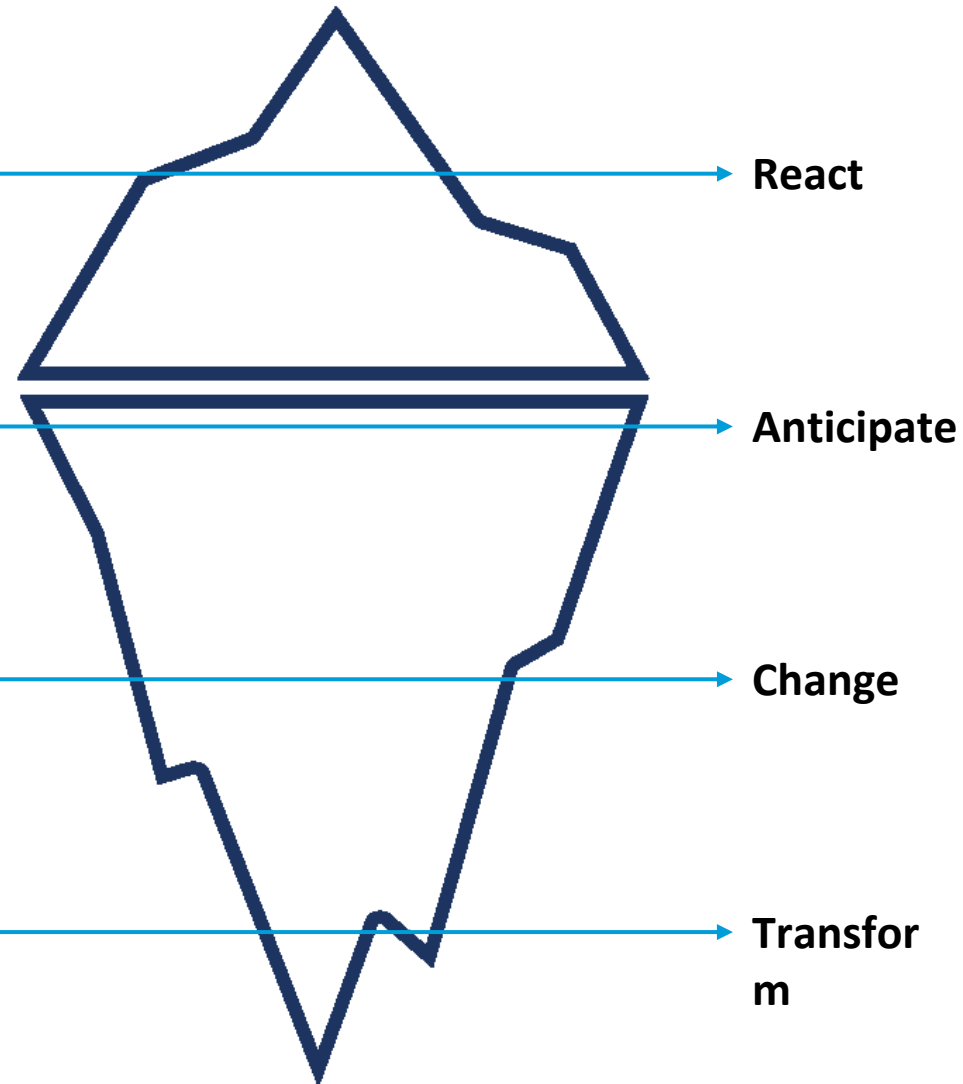
What has been happening?
Repetition or cycles of a problem

Underlying Structure

What factors maintain the problem?
Policies, relationships, power dynamics

Mental Models

What assumptions maintain the system?
Beliefs, values, assumptions





BANGLADESH CASE

Overview

The project: A USAID-funded agricultural innovation project in Bangladesh, called Rice and Diversified Crops (RDC) activity

The challenge:

- More timely and systemic testing of pilot grantmaking innovations for scale-up or scale back
- Cost-effective integration system-thinking tools into a traditional monitoring and evaluation system
- Train and transfer to local staff for implementation over time

The tools:

- Network analysis
- Qualitative systems analysis
- Traditional monitoring processes and forms

Notable result(s):

- Qualitative systems analysis informs the project on the overall context for innovation and change
- Network analysis mainstreamed into traditional pilot monitoring processes, provides more timely, nuanced feedback



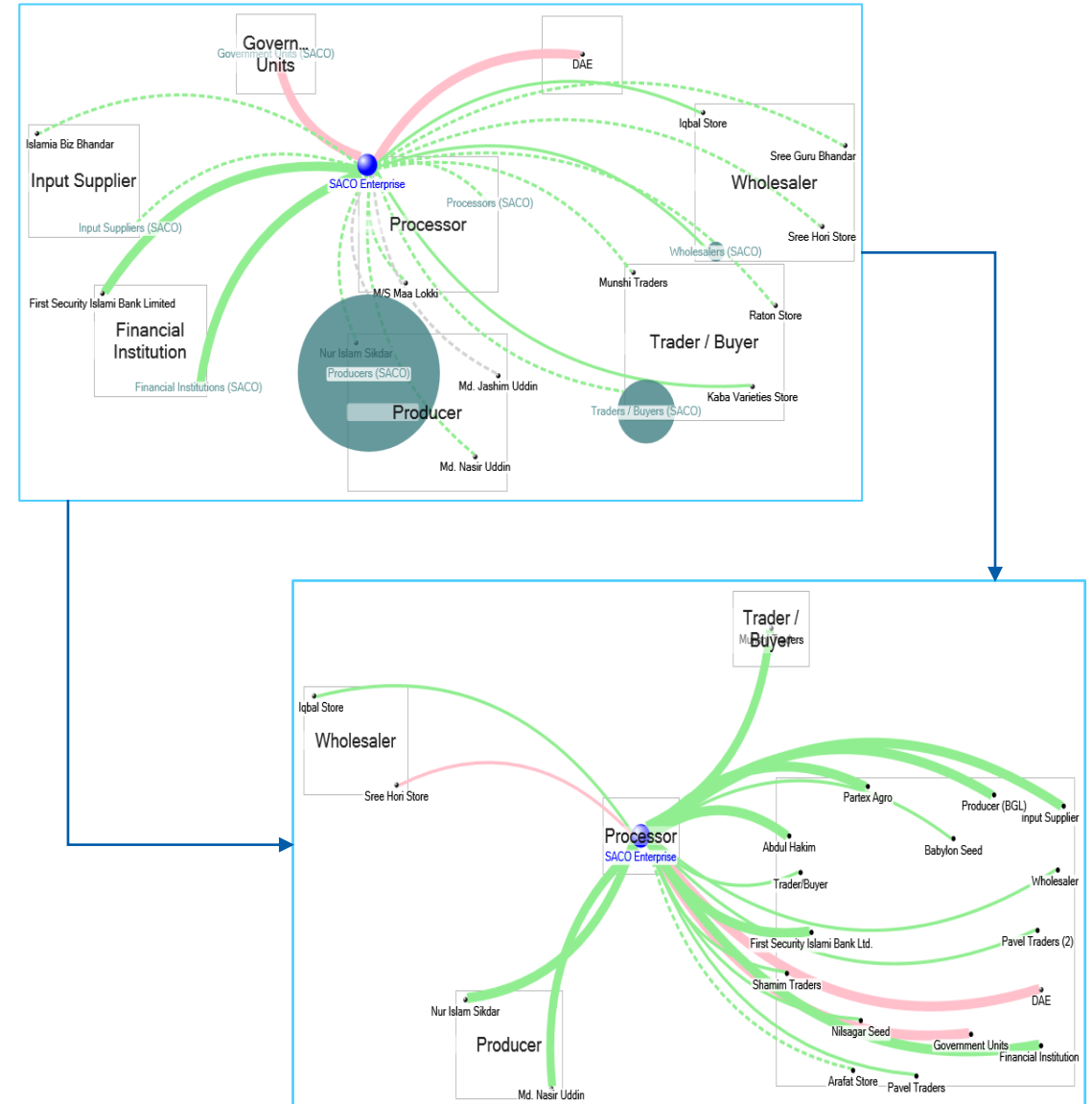
Some Practical Lessons

Integrate network data collection with routine monitoring activities and forms: Project staff can conduct iterative monitoring of all pilot activities. All data is collected through one form, meaning no additional expenses.

Train extensively: We conducted a 2-day training for all staff, another 2-day training for M&E staff, plus several weeks of on-the-job training and technical assistance over the course of a year.

Demonstrate value early: Monitoring / baseline tools aren't very compelling to field staff, as they typically don't generate value until post-intervention. For this reason, we built upfront analysis and program design recommendations into our baseline research. See some design insights in our marketlinks.org post [here](#).

Provide a roadmap and templates: We produced a baseline report including several templates that MEL staff could easily utilize in the same format for subsequent network analyses. See the final report and templates [here](#).



Contact & Questions

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