

# Resident Power Ladder

## Residents in Control

*Residents control goal setting, planning and implementation.*

## Residents as Advisors / Advocates

*Residents participate in goal setting, planning & implementation. Residents may serve on governing body, advisory group, or as advocates for the organization.*

## Residents as Information Sources

*Residents participate as part of focus groups. Staff consults with residents. Residents fill out surveys.*

## Residents as Recipients

*Residents receive services or information.*



source: The ABCD Institute

## EXERCISE: Resident Power Ladder - "Desk Version"

**CONCEPT:** Community catalysts can exponentially increase their impact by investing time and resources toward mobilizing, connecting and supporting the leadership, skills and solutions of ordinary community members and their associations. This focus results in more effective solutions, unlocked resources, increased agency and action within neighborhoods, and improved relationships between organizations and their communities.

**PURPOSE:** This exercise can (a) create clarity for you and for others working on your project around the current role of residents in your project(s), (b) reveal strategic opportunities for strengthening that role in ways that make sense for your project, organization and community capacities & context, and (c) surface valuable insights and data around how this role has shifted from the beginning of your project.

**HOW-TO:** Fill in the grids below, referencing the ladder. Do this alone as a "desk" exercise, with other staff involved in your project, or with residents and stakeholders you have engaged with thus far. (Note: the third option can yield unexpected insights, build trust and relationships with and between your partners, and reveal strategic opportunities.)

| My project(s) or programs(s): | Who are the 'residents'? | Power Ladder location NOW | IDEAL Power Ladder location | Power Ladder location at project LAUNCH | Steps that can move residents up the power ladder in this project/program |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|
|                               |                          |                           |                             | date:                                   |   |

## REFERENCE & RESOURCES:

# Resident Power Ladder



**Residents in Control**  
*Residents control goal setting, planning and implementation.*

**Residents as Advisors / Advocates**  
*Residents participate in goal setting, planning & implementation. Residents may serve on governing body, advisory group, or as advocates for the organization.*

**Residents as Information Sources**  
*Residents participate as part of focus groups. Staff consults with residents. Residents fill out surveys.*

**Residents as Recipients**  
*Residents receive services or information.*

source: The ABCD Institute



video:



with **Ron Dwyer-Voss**  
The ABCD Institute

**TOOL OVERVIEW:**  
Resident Power Ladder



Created for the IMLS Community Catalyst Initiative  
DE / ABCD Technical Assistance, 2019

### “Power Ladder Exercise”

Accompanying materials:

[In-Person Exercise Facilitator’s Guide](#)  
[Power Ladder Slide](#)

## ADDITIONAL TOOLS & RESOURCES FOR BUILDING RESIDENT POWER:

- [“From Input to Ownership: How Nonprofits Can Engage with the People They Serve to Carry Out Their Missions”](#) (Bridgespan Group)
- [When People Care Enough to Act, Chapter 3 and 4](#) / [Purchase Book](#) (Mike Green)
- [“Off the Roundabout”](#) / [“Bridging the Gap: Expert to Alongsider”](#) (Cormac Russell, Nurture Development)
- [Strategies for Institutions as Servants](#) (Mike Green)
- [SHIFT: Participant-Centered Rubric](#) (Denver Foundation)
- [Index of Community Engagement Techniques](#) (Tamarack Institute)

*This tool was developed by the ABCD Evaluation Team for the IMLS Community Catalyst Initiative (2019)*