

TOOLKIT FOR FACILITATION OF EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION

REACH ALLIES Program
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ABOUT EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION

Evaluation is an essential component of health programming that serves to assess program progress, determine the efficacy of investments, and inform necessary course correction. As traditional evaluation approaches often consist of external evaluators assessing the success and shortcomings of a program, the inclusion of program stakeholders and the ownership they feel towards the evaluation can be limited. Dr. Fetterman designed the empowerment evaluation methodology to foster greater inclusion and self-determination in the evaluation process. Dr. Fetterman describes the empowerment evaluation as “an evaluation approach that aims to increase the probability of achieving program success by (1) providing program stakeholders with tools for assessing the planning, implementation, and self-evaluation of their program, and; (2) mainstreaming evaluation as a part of the planning and management of the program/organization”. The approach is built on the theory that when stakeholders and communities conduct their own evaluations, they are more likely to believe the results are credible and to act on the recommendations in turn. Through the empowerment evaluation approach, diverse program stakeholders determine the goals they are trying to achieve, assess where they stand in terms of reaching these goals, and determine plans to further their achievement. This process fosters a cycle of reflection and action and works to integrate evaluation as a part of program operations and management rather than as a separate activity.

This Toolkit is designed to help you conduct your own empowerment evaluation, ideally with the help of an evaluation coach or critical friend. It provides guidance on how to facilitate and implement an empowerment evaluation approach, along with resource materials to support the process. This toolkit can be adapted or modified to specific contexts or audiences based on your needs. If you have questions regarding the empowerment evaluation or need help conducting activities, please review the [empowerment evaluation repository](#).

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

Before the workshop

Before the empowerment evaluation workshop, take the following steps:

- 1) Determine the list of participants. It is helpful to have a diverse range of stakeholders involved with the program, project, or initiative in the workshop to incorporate different perspectives.
- 2) Assign a documenter to take comprehensive minutes during the workshop.
- 3) If the workshop is conducted online, generate a meeting link using a platform of choice (Zoom, Google Meet, Skype, etc.), and share the joining details with participants in advance.
- 4) Determine means of recording the meeting (with the consent of participants).
- 5) Draft an agenda for the meeting with approximate durations for each session and share it with participants. An agenda may have the following components:
 - a. Introduction to empowerment evaluation
 - b. Step 1 – Mission
 - c. Step 2 – Taking Stock
 - d. Step 3 – Plans for the Future
 - e. Monitoring: Evaluation Dashboards
 - f. Discussion on next steps
- 6) Assess the language competencies of participants and engage translators or assign a team member to translate accordingly.
- 7) If the workshop is taking place virtually, share edit access to the empowerment evaluation tool (Google Sheets) with all participants. Please see Annex 1 for the tools.

Introduction to empowerment evaluation

- 1) At the beginning of the workshop, present the introductory empowerment evaluation [presentation](#) to participants.
- 2) After the presentation, request participants to share any questions or thoughts they have regarding the presentation.

An alternative is to film short videos with role-playing of the three-step process. These videos would demonstrate how each step is envisaged. Three or four people could participate in each video (one facilitator and two – three participants). These videos could be developed in English, Hindi, Tamil, and Odia. Potentially the M&E State Leads can help make these videos, which would serve as a training opportunity as well.

Step 1 – Mission

The mission step is designed to help ensure consensus on the key objectives of the program and to engage participants in the collaborative process.

- 1) Ask participants the question: “What are we trying to achieve through this program? What is our ultimate aim?”
- 2) Give participants five minutes to reflect on their own views of the program mission. While this exercise is designed to foster reflection, participants must understand that the mission should be defined within the program’s scope of work.
- 3) If the workshop is taking place in person, you may request participants to write down their mission statements on a large sheet of paper or a whiteboard on an aisle in front of the group. Alternatively, you may request participants to share their mission statements verbally, and a designated scribe can write down each participant’s statement.
- 4) If the workshop is taking place virtually, request participants to write down their mission statements in the mission sheet of the EE worksheet tool (found in Annex 1).
- 5) Once participants have completed this exercise, read some of the statements out loud to the group. Allow participants to share thoughts they have about any of the mission statements shared.
- 6) After the workshop, the mission statements should be synthesized into a single statement. You may request a volunteer or a volunteer group to do this after the workshop, or you may complete this task yourself after the workshop.
- 7) The draft mission statement should be shared with the group and refined as needed based on feedback from participants.

Step 2 – Taking Stock

The taking stock step is designed to identify key program activities needed to achieve the mission and to assess how well these are going and why.

- 1) Ask participants to think of the activities that they or the program need to do in order to achieve the mission as determined in the previous step.
- 2) If the workshop is taking place in person, you may request participants to write down these activities on a large sheet of paper or a whiteboard. Alternatively, you may request participants to share the activities they identified verbally, and a designated scribe can write it down.
- 3) If the workshop is taking place virtually, request participants to write down these activities in the 2a taking stock brainstorming sheet of the EE worksheet tool.
- 4) Once the list of activities has been generated, it is time for participants to determine which activities are the most important to evaluate as a group. In order to do this, a system for prioritization will be used. If the workshop is taking place in person, give each participant 5 dots (these dots can be small pieces of paper with tape or stickers). Request participants to distribute their dots across the activities identified based on how important they believe them to be. For example, a participant could place all five of their dots on one activity if he/she believes that that activity is especially more important than all of the others. The participant could place three of their dots on that activity, and the other two on other activities. The participant could also place one dot on the top five activities (according to him/her). It is up to the participants how they wish to distribute the dots. Please see the example image below:

Activity	
Curriculum Dev.	● ● ● ● ●
Coordination	● ● ●
Advocacy	● ● ● ●
Training	● ● ● ● ● ●
Perform. Man.	● ●

- 5) If the workshop is taking place virtually, the same process will be followed. Instead of using physical dots, each participant should distribute a total of five votes across the activities listed in the worksheet. The list of brainstormed activities should be added to sheet 2b of the EE worksheet tool, and the prioritization exercise should be conducted in this sheet. Please see the example image below.

STEP 2b: PRIORITIZATION		AB	CE	KD	HT
	(Initials Here) -->				
Total	Total of 5 Votes Per Person Vote [5 times] for the most important things we do to achieve our mission				
	Activities				
5	Curriculum Development	3	1		1
3	Coordination	1		1	1
4	Advocacy		2	1	1
6	Training	1	1	3	1
2	Performance Management		1		1

- 6) Once this step has been completed, the activities with the highest count/highest number of dots are considered to be the most important by participants collectively. Select the 10 most important activities for the next stage of the taking stock step.
- 7) If you are conducting this exercise offline, write down the 10 most important activities in a separate sheet of paper or on a whiteboard. Make a line above the activity listed at the top and extend it outwards. Write the initials or shortened names of participants above the line. Please see the example image below.

Activity	AB	CE	KD	HT	Avg
Curriculum Dev.					
Advocacy					
Partner. build.					
Training					
Average					

- 8) If you are conducting this exercise online, copy the 10 most important activities into sheet 2c. Have participants write their initials in the designated space on the sheet.
- 9) Request each participant to rate each activity on a scale of 1(low) to 10 (high) based on how well he/she believes that the program is doing in this area. Scores may likely be low towards the beginning of the program when little work has been achieved. Tell participants that they should not be afraid of giving low ratings to activities if they believe that it is fair. Low scores reflect room for improvement and should be viewed in that spirit. Encourage openness and honesty during this process and inform participants that the scoring they give will not reflect poorly on them.

10) Once participants have written down their ratings. Calculate the average rating given per activity. Point out this average score to participants so that they can observe what the general view on an activity is. Please see the example images below.

Activity	AB	CE	KD	HT	Avg
Curriculum Dev.	3	1	2	3	2.25
Advocacy	5	3	5	2	3.75
Partner. build.	8	2	5	6	5.25
Training	2	6	2	9	4.75
Average	4.5	3	3.5	5	4

STEP 2c: RATINGS & DIALOGUE How well are we doing on each one of these prioritized activities? Scale: 1=Awful and 10 = Perfect	AVG Rating	AB	CE	KD	HT
Curriculum Development	2.25	3	1	2	3
Advocacy	3.75	5	3	5	2
Partnership Building	5.25	8	2	5	6
Training	4.75	2	6	2	9

11) Request participants to share more details regarding why they gave the score that they did. For each activity, request a sample of participants to share their reasoning behind their ratings. Request participants who gave very low or very high ratings to share their reasoning first. Many participants will have very different perspectives on how well a particular activity is going, and it is helpful to hear why those differences of opinion exist. This dialogue will provide a greater understanding of the work being done in that area. Ideally, conduct this dialogue process for each activity, however, if this is not possible due to time or other constraints, choose the most important activities and choose activities with particularly low scores to investigate further through the dialogue process. Some guiding questions to help facilitate this process include:

- a. Why did you give the activity the rating that you did?
- b. For you to give a higher rating in the future, what needs to happen?
- c. What factors have contributed to your rating?

12) Support and encourage participants to share their views throughout the process. Do not criticize a participant for having a view that is different from your own. The purpose of this process is to incorporate all voices and perspectives.

- 13) It is important to record the dialogue, especially the reason for the ratings. The evidence for the ratings will inform or guide the selection of strategies used in the next step - Plans for the Future.

Step 3 – Plans for the Future

The plans for the future step are designed to build off of the findings from the taking stock exercise to develop strategic plans for the future based on the needs identified.

- 1) Choose three priority topics from the taking stock exercise. Based on these priority topics, identify the overarching goal the project would like to achieve is. For example, if the activity is “Capacity building for TB champions” the goal could be “TB champions are capacitated to do X, Y, and Z”.
- 2) Once these goals have been determined, request participants to identify strategies for achieving these goals. Strategies are the pathways that need to be followed to achieve these goals. For example, if the goal is “TB champions are capacitated to do X, Y and Z”, strategies may include “TB champions receive comprehensive training workshops on a weekly basis” or “regular review meetings are conducted to identify areas of support needed for TB champions”. Participants can share all strategies that they believe are relevant to achieving this goal. The evidence shared during Taking Stock concerning each rating should be used to guide the strategy selected in Plans for the Future. If communication was a selected activity and the ratings were low, the workshop member might have said it was low because they never have agendas. One of the strategies to improve communication in Plans for the Future would be to develop and follow agendas.
- 3) Once strategies have been developed, identify the evidence that is needed to measure the progress made in employing the strategies. For example, if the strategy is “TB champions receive comprehensive training workshops every week”, the evidence could be “Number of training workshops conducted”. Another form of evidence would point out whether the workshops conducted were considered to be effective training workshops.

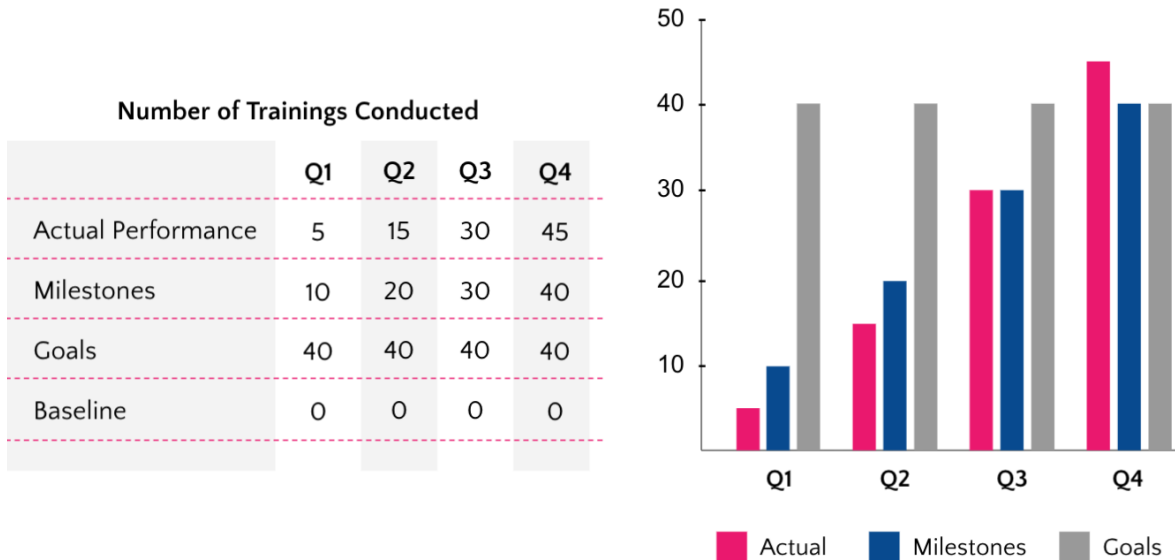
Documenting the Exercise: Reports and Videos

This 3-step exercise is useful for generating learnings and ensuring that the voices of a range of program participants are included in assessing the program. However, it is important to translate the findings from the workshop into action.

- 1) Develop a workshop report that includes learnings and takeaways from the workshop. It is important to have a designated note taker and record the meeting to ensure that the report has high-quality content and details from the discussion. Please see Annex III for the template that can be used for developing the report.
- 2) Ensure that all materials developed through the workshop are saved or recorded. If you were working on sheets of paper, take a picture of all of the sheets used. If you have stored information on your phone or computer, upload the content to Google Drive or email it to others to ensure no data is lost if your phone/computer is compromised.

Monitoring: Evaluation Dashboards

- 1) Based on the plans for the future developed, generate evaluation dashboards to set goals and track progress. These dashboards can be developed to include annual goals (where do we want to be a year from now) and quarterly goals (what is our aim for the end of the quarter). Based on the example plans for the future listed above, a dashboard could be designed to track the number of training workshops conducted over the year, with goals set on a quarterly and annual basis. Please see the diagram below:



- 2) Make at least three evaluation dashboards, but feel free to make more based on what you judge is needed.
- 3) Develop a plan for updating progress in the dashboard every quarter. This plan may include collecting data monthly on the indicators identified. One person in the team should be assigned to make sure this data collection and updating of progress takes place regularly.

Subsequent EE Workshops

Subsequent empowerment evaluation workshops should be conducted to continue the process. You can conduct 3 workshops (beginning, middle, and end of year) or 4 (quarterly) workshops a year if time and funds permit. However, you should generate 4 quarterly evaluation dashboard reports during the year, even if only 3 workshops are conducted.

- 1) Follow the same preparatory steps listed earlier in the document prior to the subsequent EE workshops.
- 2) If you are working online, copy the EE workshop tool that you used during the first workshop and delete the prioritization and ratings given, along with the plans for the future section. Keep the mission statements and the brainstormed list of activities. Keep the top 10 activities identified in sheet 2c.
- 3) If you are working offline, copy the mission statements identified during the first workshop onto a piece of paper or whiteboard (if you have the original piece of paper used or a photograph of the mission statements, this may be used as well). Copy the brainstormed list of activities identified during the first workshop onto a piece of paper or whiteboard (if you have the original piece of paper used or a photograph of the brainstormed list, this may be used as well). Write down the top 10 activities identified during the first workshop onto a piece of paper or whiteboard and draw a line above the list that extends out.
- 4) An extensive introduction to the EE methodology will not be required after the first workshop unless participants in later workshops were not present in the first one. If the group in the subsequent workshop was largely present in the first workshop, spend 5 minutes providing a quick overview of the three-step approach to help participants remember the process.
- 5) Completing the mission exercise a second time is not required unless the environment or purpose has changed radically since the last exercise, however, give participants 5 minutes to read through the earlier mission statements and to add any additional mission statements they believe are relevant in a separate column.
- 6) Give participants 5 minutes to go through the list of brainstormed activities and allow them to add any additional activities they think of in a separate column.
- 7) Show participants the top 10 activities that were identified in the earlier workshop. Ask if there are any changes to these activities or if any are no longer relevant. You can substitute a priority activity for another activity present on the brainstorming list if a participant suggests the change and if other participants are in agreement. If not, keep the same list of activities as they appeared in the earlier workshop.
- 8) Conduct the ratings and dialogue exercises with the participants for the top 10 activities. Please follow the process detailed in the Taking Stock section in this document.
- 9) Conduct the plans for the future exercise based on learnings from the ratings and dialogue exercise. Please follow the process detailed in the Plans for the Future section in this document.
- 10) Develop a workshop report. An example empowerment evaluation report can be found [here](#). See the template in Annex 3 as a reference. These reports will be useful for a range of stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in the initiative.

- 11) Ensure that all materials developed through the workshop are saved or recorded.
- 12) Update or revise the evaluation dashboards if needed based on the insights generated during the plans for the future exercise.

ANNEX 1: TOOLS

Please do not write directly in the tools shared below. Instead, make a copy of the tool and use that copy to work in. Name the copy with the name of the workshop and the date. For example State X REACH ALLIES EE Workshop_June_04_2021.

Empowerment Evaluation Tool – English:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10c8R1NC8HG0y5z206jHgLyZZbPxAxOZ0RwHgyZRJpBU/edit?usp=sharing>

Empowerment Evaluation Tool – Hindi: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1kk-JVMswQ7wVPvx7ao2Qmw_o56oYGXZd91O2untsrms/edit?usp=sharing

Empowerment Evaluation Tool – Tamil:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1oGkHzs1uWLzkiVkuU7JeRGOWRaVI087jSi7k2U98mV8M/edit?usp=sharing>

ANNEX 2: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What advantage does the empowerment evaluation approach provide that traditional monitoring mechanisms do not?

A: The empowerment evaluation approach is designed to promote inclusion, self-determination, and organizational learning, which traditional evaluation often does not. Incorporating a range of stakeholders in the evaluation process provides deep insights and diverse perspectives that may otherwise be overlooked. It also increases the buy-in of stakeholders towards evaluation results, which increases the likelihood of the program pursuing strategic action in response to evaluation insights. The process fosters active reflection and encourages all stakeholders to critically assess their own work in a constructive way.

Q: The system that we work in is very hierarchical. How can we implement a collaborative approach like this in such an environment?

A: The empowerment evaluation approach provides an opportunity to foster inclusion in an otherwise hierarchical environment. Conducting a meeting with members of leadership to introduce the methodology can help foster buy-in and break down resistance to the approach. When facilitating the workshop, make a point of asking participants who are at different levels within the organization to share their thoughts and reflections as certain participants may be unwilling to share if unprompted.

Q: Who should I invite to participate in the empowerment evaluation process?

A: The more stakeholders that are included in the EE process, the more robust and insightful the process will be. An ideal empowerment evaluation should incorporate the perspectives of stakeholders across levels and from different organizations or entities that are connected to the program. In a health program for example, the empowerment evaluation process may be conducted with stakeholders across the implementing organization, including leadership, managers, technical advisors, field workers, etc., in addition to members of the health system who interact with the program, beneficiary representatives, and key partners. You never know where the critical insight might come from to help the organization improve or even survive.

Q: We already have a defined program mission. Why do we need to do the mission step in the exercise?

A: The mission-building exercise encourages all participants to think critically about the work that they are doing and what they are trying to achieve. Having participants generate their own mission statements draws them into the process and helps them become comfortable sharing their input. The mission statements generated should be aligned with the predefined program mission statement. If a participant shares a mission statement that is not aligned with program goals, other participants can ensure that the participant is better oriented on the program and its goals in the future in part by seeing everyone else's comments and by hearing from them during the session.

Q: Should the components listed during the taking stock exercise (2a – brainstorm list) be activities or outcomes? For example, should a component be “Training of workers” or “Workers understand and apply training content”?

A: The list of components can include both activities and outcomes. The taking stock section should not include mission-level outcomes, but intermediate outcomes and activities can both be included. When building the evaluation dashboards, however, it is important that the indicators included are measurable and specific.

Q: Participants in the workshop are unwilling to give honest ratings. They give each activity a high rating, despite the fact that they do not believe those components are doing well. How can I address this problem?

A: Make it clear from the beginning of the workshop that honesty and openness is encouraged and that the scoring participants give will not reflect poorly upon them in any way. This type of hesitation is often common at the beginning of the process. Tell participants that if activities are given a 10, it would indicate that there is no more work to be done. During the dialogue process, ask participants to share what they believe the program could improve upon regarding the identified activities. Remind participants that this is a window of opportunity to fix what’s broken or needs attention or simply to improve performance.

Q: Some participants have given ratings to activities based on how important they view an activity to be instead of how well they believe the program is doing in executing that activity. Is this a problem? Should I ask participants to revise their numbers?

A: One of the objectives of the dialogue session on the ratings is to identify this type of thinking. It is not a problem if a few participants provide ratings using this logic. However, it is helpful to identify when ratings were given using that reasoning and to discourage participants from determining their ratings based on perceived importance instead of perceived progress. If you prefer, you may request a participant to revise a rating to reflect how he/she believes the program is doing in this area, but it is not strictly required.

Q: Some participants in the workshop do not know very much about certain activities. Should participants avoid giving ratings for activities they do not know as much about?

A: No, participants should give ratings for all of the priority activities identified. It is completely fine and expected that different participants will have different levels of knowledge on certain activities. It is important to capture a range of perspectives on all activities nonetheless. It is important to hear people’s perceptions of the activity regardless of their knowledge because people act on their perceptions.

Q: Once I have built the evaluation dashboards, what should I do with them?

A: Ensure that there is a plan and people in place for updating the data in the dashboards quarterly. Make sure that the program team can view the dashboards so that they can see progress over the course of the year. Data in the dashboards should be updated every month. The dashboards should be incorporated in the quarterly reports.

ANNEX 3: WORKSHOP REPORT FORMATS

<p>Cover Page</p> <p>Content to Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Date of Report ● Name of Report ● Date of Workshop(s) ● Name of Author(s) ● Picture of key activity or graph and contact information
<p>Heading: Introduction</p> <p>Content to Include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) About REACH ALLIES 2) About the workshop 3) About the Empowerment Evaluation 3-Step Process
<p>Heading: Mission</p> <p>Content to Include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Description of the process followed 2) List of mission statements shared by participants 3) A comprehensive mission statement is developed that synthesizes the other mission statements
<p>Heading: Taking Stock (prioritization)</p> <p>Content to Include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Description of process followed (brainstorm list and prioritization) 2) List of the top 10 activities selected to rate and discuss (can use a bar chart to show how many dots/votes each activity received)
<p>Heading: Taking Stock (rating and dialogue)</p> <p>Content to Include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Description of the process followed (providing ratings and discussing rationale) 2) List of activities with their respective average ratings (can use a bar chart to show the average rating each activity was given) 3) Details from the dialogue component, including the insights participants gave on each of the activities regarding progress and roadblocks 4) Pictures from the activity

Heading: Plans for the Future**Content to Include:**

- 1) Description of the process followed
- 2) Example plans for the future developed, including goals, strategies and evidence
- 3) Pictures from the activity

Heading: Evaluation Dashboards**Content to Include:**

- 1) Description of evaluation dashboards
- 2) Evaluation dashboard tables and bar charts with performance, milestones, and goal (Include evaluation dashboard tables with actual performance first, followed by milestones, and finally goals. This way the graph that is created will contrast the actual performance with the milestone with the goal [in that order]. This format makes it easier to see how well the group is performing or reaching its milestones each quarter in relation to its annual goals.)

Heading: Conclusion**Content to Include:**

- 1) Summary of report and progress made
- 2) Statement of intent for the way forward

Heading: References**Content to Include:**

- 1) Any sources used for developing report content

Potential Annexures to Include:

- 1) Full list of mission statements if there are too many to include in the body of the report. If there are too many to put in the body, a sample can be included in the body and the annex can have the full list.
- 2) List of participants from the workshop
- 3) Additional data from the workshop, such as individual ratings for each activity, if required

[Example Empowerment Evaluation Report \(full length report\)](#)

[Example Empowerment Evaluation Report \(abbreviated report\)](#)

ANNEX 4: EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION RESOURCES

1. Better Evaluation Write-Up on Empowerment Evaluation (*recommended*):
https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/empowerment_evaluation
2. Stanford Social Innovations Review on the Empowerment Evaluation of the Digital Villages Initiative (*recommended*):
https://ssir.org/books/excerpts/entry/empowerment_evaluation_in_the_digital_villages_hewlett_packards_15_million
3. Ignite Lecture on Empowerment Evaluation (*recommended*):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjUvV4HHH38>
4. Report from the REACH ALLIES workshop in November (*for internal use only*):
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Dma4P0B2EVoGMJNwDN0Hx64W1TrXV4TD/view?usp=sharing>
5. ARTD Consultants Article on Building Trust through Empowerment Evaluation:
<https://www.artd.com.au/news/building-trust-through-empowerment-evaluation/>
6. David's presentation at ARDT Consultants' Business as Unusual Webinar about Empowerment Evaluation & COVID-19. - Introduction or overview: <https://vimeo.com/421394885> - The 3 steps: <https://vimeo.com/421399693> - A demonstration of how to use empowerment evaluation remotely: <https://vimeo.com/421401084>
7. Interview with Dr. Fetterman on Empowerment Evaluation:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGwVDFjg6R0>
8. Academic Medicine Article on Using Empowerment Evaluation to Evaluate and Transform a Medical School Curriculum:
https://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Fulltext/2010/05000/Empowerment_Evaluation_A_Collaborative_Approach.25.aspx

BOOKS

Fetterman, D.M., Kaftarian, S., and Wandersman, A. (2015). [Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-assessment, Evaluation Capacity Building, and Accountability](#) (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [This is the most recent empowerment evaluation book. It is an updated and consolidated presentation about the approach]

Fetterman, D.M. (2013). [Empowerment Evaluation in the Digital Villages: Hewlett-Packard's \\$15 Million Race Toward Social Justice](#). Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Fetterman, D.M. and Wandersman, A. (2005). [Empowerment Evaluation Principles in Practice](#). New York: Guilford Publications.

Fetterman, D.M. (2001). [Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation](#). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.