80% of Rwandans, and billions of people worldwide live in homes with dirt floors. Parasites and bacteria thrive in unsanitary flooring, causing serious health consequences.

EarthEnable floors are the solution! At 70% cheaper than concrete, we provide affordable sanitary flooring for a healthy home environment.
Letter from the CEO

Dear EarthEnablers,

Welcome to 2016! Here is to a year of joy, success, and yes, clean floors.

What a year! It's hard to believe it was just a year ago when we were proudly reporting that we had hired 13 people and installed nearly 10,000 square feet. In the past twelve months, we increased our employee count by 5.5x (79 and counting!) and installed over 9 times (!) more square feet than we did in 2014. As a result, over 350 families now live on a clean and sanitary floor. Next year, we are aiming to install floors for 1,000 more households - tripling our impact in one year.

Not only did we exceed all of our impact targets, but we are positioning ourselves to grow in coming years by building our team, developing our sales channels, investing in systems, and developing new products lines to reach additional customer segments. The demand for a clean and healthy floor has been proven. Our team can't wait to scale our impact across Rwanda, and to improve health while creating jobs and building with environmentally sustainable materials.

I am so proud of our team for what we have accomplished, and so grateful to all of our supporters for enabling this year's success.

Best regards,

Gayatri Datar
Co-Founder and CEO
What we do

80% of Rwandans and billions of people worldwide live in homes with dirt floors. Dirt floors are a major cause of sicknesses including diarrhea, respiratory illness, malnutrition and vector-borne diseases. But existing flooring solutions (concrete or tiles) are too expensive for most homes in Rwanda. Thus, dirt floors, and the illnesses they cause, are an everyday reality for most people.

EarthEnable provides an alternative to unsanitary dirt floors and prohibitively expensive concrete floors: earthen floors. Earthen floors are a proven technology in the United States, and they are easy to clean, abrasion-resistant and modern looking. They are made of compacted earthen materials which are locally sourced, and then sealed with EarthEnable's proprietary drying oil that seals the floor by forming a plastic-like resin when it dries. This allows EarthEnable to build hard, sanitary floors at a fraction of the cost of concrete. We charge about 40 cents per square foot for a floor that we estimate will last 10-15 years, which means that a typical 200 square foot home costs around $80 USD to floor.
2015 has been a thrilling year of firsts and of growth at EarthEnable.

In response to customer feedback, we continued to make iterations on both the flooring product as well as the varnish, and now have an excellent product that customers love.

We also made big changes in our business model, hiring our first sales representatives, purchasing a pick-up truck and a large dump truck that reduced costs of material transport substantially, and creating mason teams led by foremen to create leverage for our management staff.

Considerable demand for our floors means we have upscaled operations significantly, serving ten times as many customers this year. This has meant training more masons, introducing new operational processes and enhancing our customer service.

In 2015, we replaced dirt floors in over 300 households, providing a healthy home environment for over 1,500 individuals in more than 100 umudugudus (villages) in Rwanda's Eastern Province.
Looking ahead to 2016

Expanding product lines

Our primary goal at EarthEnable for 2016 is to ensure our floors as affordable as possible, so that even the poorest can afford sanitary flooring. At the end of 2015, we began working with local microfinance institutions to provide a new financing product which will allow payments to be spread over time. In 2016, a typical 200 square foot house will cost as little as $8 a month for a year to floor.

Since labor is a significant proportion of the costs of our floors, we are also developing a “do-it-yourself floor” which we hope will cost as little as 20 cents per square foot to build, or $40 for a typical house, compared to $200-300 for a concrete floor.
In 2016, we plan to expand our operations to reach several more districts across Rwanda, in order to meet ever growing demand for EarthEnable floors. This will mean training many more masons, helpers, and sales reps, hiring more operations managers and opening new offices and material distribution centres to serve geographically dispersed rural areas.

We are also exploring a new partnership with Ugandan NGO, Whisper. Hassan, an experienced mason, came to spend December working with our operations team learning how to build EarthEnable floors, and will be managing earthen flooring pilots in Jinja, Uganda in 2016. Jinja is plagued with terrible jiggers outbreaks, and flooring is the most effective prevention.

We are matching our operational expansion by building new IT systems to poise us for growth. We are particularly grateful to Salesforce for their pro-bono support in getting EarthEnable up and running on the platform!
Sylvester is 38 year old farmer from Mwogo. He was living with his wife and 4 children on a dirt floor in the home he built 5 years ago. His children fell sick frequently and cleaning the house was difficult, but he couldn't afford concrete. In October he heard about EarthEnable and signed up for a floor. His 15 year old daughter says she is so happy she can now mop the floor and the whole family is living a cleaner life.

Best of all, Sylvester was so happy with his new floor that he decided to pay for a floor to be built at his mother's house across the road!

Jean Bosco, 33, lives with his 3 children in a small house in Juru. For 7 years, he had been living on a dirt floor as concrete was too expensive for him to build. As a result of living on dirt, his children were getting sick and in the rainy season the house would become very muddy and dirty. When he heard about EarthEnable he immediately wanted to buy a floor!

He says, "My kids are healthy and my wife is proud of my decision. all my neighbors come everyday to look at my floor and three of them have decided to get the EarthEnable floor".
DIY floor pilots this year have already been exceptionally successful. Pilot DIY customers have been able to build floors that are smooth, level, waterproof and abrasion resistant with only one hour of training.

We are continuing to research and improve the EarthEnable product to provide the smoothest, hardest and cheapest floor possible. Currently we are researching whether the addition of beeswax will create a smoother finish to our floors, and experimenting with new colors to give our customers options.
Henry, Senior Operations Manager, tries his hand at design thinking, post-its and all!

In 2015 the EarthEnable team increased substantially to 79 employees across operations, sales, and management.

DIY pilot participant family on their brand new floor

Using a bubble level to ensure the floor will be flat
Partnerships & Awards in 2015

EarthEnable's original and innovative business model has been recognised by a number of social enterprise funding institutions and awarding institutions this year. In particular we would like to thank all our partners for their support in 2015:

- Rainer Arnhold Fellowship from the Mulago Foundation
- Spring Accelerator
- USAID Development Innovation Ventures
- Bluhm/Helfand Social Innovation Fellowship
- Agora For Good
- Stanford Institute for Innovation in Developing Economies
Thank you!

The work of EarthEnable would not be possible without the generous support of the people and organisations who believe in our mission to floor the world! In particular we would like to extend special thanks to...

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