It’s been a bitter cold winter this year, but for the most part, we in the U.S. have the luxury of watching the temperatures drop from inside our safe, warm homes.

**Not so for the Q’ero people Esperança serves in the Peruvian Andes.** The Q’ero are widely known as the last living descendants of the Incas, surviving the Spanish conquest by receding high into the Andes mountains – upwards of 18,000 feet.

Although the climate in the Andes has always been treacherous, in recent years it has become increasingly life-threatening. Last winter, five children in Q’eros Nation were lost to the cold. Newborns are faring even worse. **The infant mortality here is an astounding 35 percent.**

Sadly, many of these deaths could have been prevented with adequate shelter. That’s why in 2018, Esperança began working with the Q’eros Nation to provide building materials and training that would save lives.

Esperança is excited to report that, thanks to the generous support of friends like you, and partners like Kahtoola for the People and the Antioch Foundation, 15 new, safe, ecological homes have been completed over the past year. Each house has three rooms, an aluminum roof covered with traditional hay, a wood-burning stove, skylights, and a greenhouse attached, which has the added benefit of warming each home.

*Inadequate housing in the harsh climate of the Andes, like the structure pictured above, has taken the lives of children and newborns. Thanks to your support, Esperança is working with the Q’eros Nation to build safe, ecological homes.*
Staying true to the Esperança model of providing a hand-up that imbues a sense of self-esteem and achievement, rather than a handout – community members from the Q’eros Nation participated in the building of these new homes. The gratitude the Q’ero showed in response was remarkable, heartfelt, and at times overwhelming!

Although the homes are complete, there is still much to do. The Q’ero still lack basic necessities that prevent various illnesses – things like readily available hot water, health education and first aid kits. In 2019, Esperança needs your help to continue its life-changing work to preserve the Q’ero culture with The Q’eros Nation Health & Hygiene Project.

Through this initiative, our goal is to train community health workers to offer first aid, as well as provide emergency First Aid kits to the community. The trained members of the Q’eros Nation will then be resources to the community for emergency health care needs. This project is critical to the survival of these people – the closest source of medical help is a ten-hour walk away!

These homes represent a huge step forward for the safety of the Q’ero people. Now that they are in place, we can take the next step to providing hope and saving lives in Peru.

Thank you for the support that is saving lives here – especially the littlest ones!
A Deadly House Safe Home
Ernesto’s family is living safe and healthy – thanks to you!

Ernesto is 49 years old and, until recently, lived with his family of six in a house that threatened the lives of those he loves most.

First, it was cold... freezing cold. Their roof, made of hay, meant temperatures inside averaged only slightly higher than outside. Second, the air inside was unhealthy. Although the roof had little ability to trap heat, it was great at trapping smoke from their cooking fire inside and coating their lungs in soot. Third, the house lacked any reliable access to hot water. That, combined with the freezing temperatures, made bathing and hand-washing a risk for hypothermia. As a result, Ernesto’s family only bathed once or twice a month – greatly increasing the risk of infections and illnesses.

With all these issues, it might surprise you to learn that Ernesto is the mayor over the five communities that make up the Q’eros Nation. If these are the conditions in the home of a leading family, you can imagine the state of the rest of the community.

Thankfully, with your support, Ernesto’s family was one of fifteen to receive a new, heated home, featured in our cover story. His roof of hay now rests on a water and airtight aluminum roof underneath. Instead of one single, shared space, the home is now sectioned off by walls that both help trap heat and provide privacy. They have a kitchen with ventilation and a solar panel to heat water for cooking and bathing. There is also a small greenhouse attached that allows them to grow nutritious veggies that wouldn’t survive the cold outside and provides additional warmth to the interior of the house.

The lives of Ernesto’s family and fourteen others have completely changed – and they have friends like you to thank for it. Ernesto’s family is another example of how, together, we are saving lives and keeping families safe in the most remote places around the world.

Help Esperança become Nonprofit of the Year!

AZ Foothills Magazine and Media that Deelivers, Inc. designate a Nonprofit of the Year and Esperança has been selected for this year’s consideration. But we need your help! Just scan the code at right to place your vote today or visit arizonafoothillsmagazine.com. Supporters are encouraged to vote once per day within the voting period which runs through May 3, 2019.
World Health Day – April 7th

It’s no secret that immunizations protect the world’s most vulnerable populations. Esperança was established on the principle of preventing disease at the source, dating back to 1970, when Founder Father Luke Tupper was among the first to begin distributing the Polio vaccine in Brazil. He believed that on-time vaccination throughout childhood was essential for saving lives on a large scale.

Thankfully, today the countries Esperança serves have robust child immunization programs, resulting in high rates of immunization. However, the importance of immunization does not end at childhood. In Bolivia, women of reproductive age (15 and older) are dying of cervical cancer at an accelerated rate, 26.3 per 100 thousand women – the highest mortality rate in the Americas. More than half of all cases of cervical cancer are caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), which is preventable with a vaccine.

“We are extremely proud of the work you make possible in Bolivia to not only raise awareness about cervical cancer, but also train health professionals to improve detection and treatment of the disease,” explains International Program Director, Anna Ortiz.

This World Health Day, know that for 49 years, Esperança has utilized vaccination education, internationally and domestically, as a key element in reducing the risk of communicable diseases. Your partnership is helping spread health, hope and healing around the world to the people and families that need it most.