

Link Letter No. 7 May 2015

**Dear friends and supporters,**

I pray that everyone had a good Easter time, celebrating all that the Lord has done for us. Our Good Friday service was a little shorter this year, I think about three hours. Thank you again for all your support as I enter my final year here in Santo Domingo.

The school year finished well at the end of February, with exams for all students. LuzCelli has agreed to continue as director of the Foundation, which is an answer to prayer.

It was with some sadness that I ended my work with the school after 18 months; however, this is due to the Foundation's acceptance of my project, and the subsequent

decision to begin a programme of life skills with school leavers and adults with learning disabilities, based on the work I have done.

So the "holiday time" in March and April has been spent praying for a leader for the programme as well as developing ideas for the type of things the youngsters can make to sell. Things like beads for necklaces, photo frames and fridge magnets all look like possibilities. The land where we hope to grow and sell ornamental plants is not quite ready, so we will begin growing vegetables in plant pots, in the Foundation building where we are planning to base



**Sharon Wilcox**  
CMS mission partner  
**Ecuador**

**Sharon Wilcox is a CMS mission partner working and living in Ecuador. She is working with children and adults with severe learning and physical disabilities, in a culture where disability still carries a high level of stigma.**



Craft ideas...

the group. We also have the opportunity to take them horse riding on a ranch run by some North American missionary friends of mine. I was telling them that I have never ridden a horse... Why did I do that? You can see from the photo that they were very persuasive. However, I do hope it was a one off. Thanks to donations from people in the UK, we will be able to buy a table tennis table and equipment and materials. We are really grateful for these.



Horse riding!

In March I visited the orphanage in Cuenca, which was in need of development and additional staffing. Every one of the 35 children were pleased to have visitors, and had insisted that they had their best clothes on, and the girls had had their hair done with baubles and slides for the occasion. Normally this is not possible as there are times when they only have one or two staff to look after them. I was able to leave them a copy of my project, which I hope will inspire and encourage them to help the older ones to learn new skills.

In the middle of April, more of our prayers were answered when Petita, a lady from the First Baptist Church, agreed to become the leader of our new programme. She is a very friendly, able lady who, although with no experience of working with people with



The orphanage

disabilities, has three grown up sons which means that she has plenty of “life experience”. I pray that I will be able to help her to understand the things she will need to know about disabilities. However, I hope that we will see people’s disabilities as secondary and instead concentrate on the abilities within the group.

This is an exciting time for the Foundation, as it develops, grows



A planning meeting for a new programme and women's project

and changes. For Jill Ball, the founder of the charity, it is confirmation that God still has His hand on the work. She arrived in Santo Domingo in the middle of April for a three-month visit, and has been busy teaching “new tricks” to the teachers, helping promote the new programme, as well as renewing old acquaintances.

I have started a new “ministry” in the afternoons, visiting people who, for different reasons, are in need of some English company. They are as follows: an English mum and baby who are a bit isolated when her Ecuadorian husband is out at work; an English lady who, for health reasons, is unable to get out and about, unless her husband is not working, and a North American missionary whose Spanish is not yet fluent enough to communicate, and who longs to have chats with other women.

Whilst this is not how I envisaged spending time, I do feel the Lord has provided this opportunity. Once I am working five days a week with the young people, I think that I will really appreciate it too.

As I write this, Irina has returned to the UK, and I have 11 months left in Ecuador. I know the time will fly by. I just hope that I will be able to do all that God has planned for



Parent roleplay on the last day of term

me in Santo Domingo, and that I will get to Chile too.

**Please pray:**

- For the Foundation, as we move forward in new and exciting ways.
- For there to be enough people interested in coming to the new Life Skills Programme.
- That the programme will be a real blessing to the young adults.

**Please thank God:**

- For Petita.
- For Jill's visit.
- For the pastoral support I receive from the Ecuador Latin Link team.

Many thanks.

Bendiciones/Blessings,

*Sharon*

PS. Did you know that you can now receive link letters by email, sent as a PDF? If you would like to receive them this way and help CMS save money, please send an email to **[links@cms-uk.org](mailto:links@cms-uk.org)**

[www.cms-uk.org](http://www.cms-uk.org)



**Church Mission Society**

Watlington Road, Oxford, OX4 6BZ Tel: 01865 787400 Fax: 01865 776375  
Email: [info@cms-uk.org](mailto:info@cms-uk.org) [www.cms-uk.org](http://www.cms-uk.org) Registered Charity Number 1131655