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Dear Friends,

My periodic update letters typically include stories of the children and the successes or challenges that we face on a day-to-day basis at the Lingap Center. But they are always stories told by me in an effort to keep you, our supporters, informed of our progress.

As you might expect, I frequently receive notes and letters from the Lingap kids telling me about the impact that the Lingap Center has had on their lives. I thought that perhaps this time, you might like to hear directly from one of the kids rather than me, so I invited several to write to you telling them about their lives at the Center. Below is one of the many letters I received, edited only slightly for clarity. Otherwise, it is word for word. Please remember that English is a second language for them and try to imagine how difficult it might be to write in a foreign language with only what they have learned in school or through the Lingap 'English as a Second Language' classes.



Lingap Center family members, Chirique, Angeline and Dufny.

Dear Benefactors,

My name is Marwein. I am 18 years old and have lived at the Lingap Center since May of 2017. I am a student at Luray II and I am in grade 12. I would like to tell you about my life. Before coming to the Lingap Center, life was very hard and I cannot imagine how hard my life was and would always be in the future without Lingap. Back then, if I could even go to school, we had to walk for two hours just to get there but one day the opportunity came and I was taken to Lingap. So many things changed for me and I changed a lot too.

The Lingap Center has taught me a lot. They shaped me and provided love, care and everything I always dreamed of. I guess words cannot express how grateful I am to be part of the Lingap family - helping and loving together. This is a family which motivated me to realize that everything is possible. It is a family that never gives up but instead, keeps going on. The Lingap Center built and strengthened me. They taught me that it is not only food or vitamins that will make me strong but it is also the word of God. They taught me to be spiritually strong because if our body needs food, how much more also does our soul need? I feel so blessed to be given the opportunity to discover more in my life. That's how my life

changed because of the Lingap Center.

One thing that I admire the most about the Lingap Center is their love for the children. They give us plenty of time and they treat us like we are their very own. They care and support each of us even if we are sick. They care, love and support each one of us always. The Lingap Center provides food, shelter, education and hope to neglected kids. They provide everything to make our dreams come true. They have contributed to many positive changes in my life. It is the best home and facility I have ever known. Because of God's plan for me, He gave me an opportunity to live in the Lingap Center and I grab it. I never regretted coming here. He sent me to a wonderful home that gave me everything to achieve my goals in life. All of the challenges I have met so far in my life are just a test of how strong or brave I am. Lingap is full of love. There are people here who have a golden heart, who really try their best to make us have a better life. They always set good examples as parents who extended moral guidance, self-discipline and unconditional love. The Lingap Center, Lingap staff, sponsors, benefactors, Tito John and Tita Judy Drake are my protection and guiding torch in the darkness of my life.



Jemar, Marwein and Rosbel planting seeds in starter flats for garden use.

Marwein

As mentioned above, I frequently receive letters like this and I have long wanted to share some of them with you. This is because, while all of these letters may be addressed to me, they are always really written to you! Through your support, you are the ones who made all of this possible and have served as a catalyst for changing so many lives in such a positive way. You are the ones who enabled us to build the Center, and for this, I want to thank you all so much.

As I read Marwein's letter, two quotes from one of my favorite cartoon characters, Winnie the Pooh, came to mind when he said:

"It makes such a difference," said Pooh, "to have someone who believes in you."

and

"Pooh, how do you spell love?" 'You don't spell love, Piglet... you feel it."

Thank you for believing in the Lingap Children's Foundation, the Lingap staff and most importantly, for believing in and loving the Lingap children.

Sincerely,

John Drake