Activities of JICA Volunteers and
the Reception for JICA Volunteers Hosted
by Minister for Foreign Affairs Kono

Since its inauguration in 1965, JICA volunteer programs have dispatched more than 50,000 people in total, as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs), Senior Volunteers and others, to developing countries in order to provide support across a wide range of fields such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries, health and sanitation, education and culture, sports, and planning and administration. The cooperation activities of the volunteers blended into the local communities, have played a huge role in the development of developing countries around the world, as well as strengthening mutual trust between Japan and other countries, which have contributed to Japanese diplomacy. Even this white paper refers to the activities of JOCV in the column “Stories from the field” on page 59, including those of Mr. Kurita, a JOCV, who alongside his role as a teacher dispatched to Malawi, hosted a Japanese-style “UNDOKAI” for local schools in the region.

A reception was hosted by Minister for Foreign Affairs Kono on July 3, 2018, with the purpose of both praising these activities of JICA volunteers to date, and to further inform the general public about the JICA volunteer programs. The reception was attended by approximately 200 people, including around 140 JICA Volunteers who had returned to Japan following the completion of their activities and those who are going to be dispatched, as well as members of JICA Parliamentary League (Japanese parliamentary league aimed at supporting the activities of Japan’s International Cooperation, especially Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs)) and those from private companies and organizations supporting JICA Volunteers, as guests.

At the reception, Minister Kono, touching upon the activities of the returned volunteers present, expressed his gratitude to all of the JICA volunteers that have already returned, currently dispatched, or will be dispatched, for their contribution to Japan’s diplomacy by having played a pivotal role in the development of their assigned countries, and strengthening mutual trust between Japan and those countries. He also encouraged the returned JICA Volunteers to keep contributing to Japan and the world.

On behalf of the JICA Volunteers, Mr. Wakao, a returned JOCV, who engaged in a village development project in Guatemala gave an address, and stated that he gained a valuable experience by participating in JOCV, and such experience has been greatly useful in his current job. Mr. Wakao also expressed his hope that the JOCV will continue to nurture diverse human resources in the future, to be active in both Japan and the world.

Going forward, the Government of Japan will continue to support the activities of the JICA volunteers, so that they can be active in their role as key actors behind “Japan’s Visible Development Cooperation.”