Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects

Public Relations Activities by Grassroots Ambassadors “Penalty”

Going to school, receiving medical treatment at a hospital, drinking clean water, living in a safe area without land mines… There are many countries and regions where such decent livelihoods cannot be taken for granted. In order to directly approach regions like this, and deliver what they truly need, the Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects (KUSANONE) was established. Having started in 1989, it reached the 30th anniversary of its commencement in 2018, and has implemented an accumulated total of approximately 30,000 projects to date.

The targets for support are mainly the construction of small-scale facilities and the provision of equipment and machinery, such as classrooms for primary and secondary schools, basic medical equipment for hospitals, and the digging of wells. Assistance has also been provided for the transportation costs incurred in granting used Japanese fire engines and ambulances, antipersonnel mine clearance and victim-support activities, provided from a humanitarian perspective, and for public-private partnerships, wherein Japanese companies work together with organizations such as NGOs.

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of KUSANONE, a letter of appointment as “Grassroots Ambassadors” was sent by the (then) State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane to Hide (Mr. Hideki Nakagawa) and Wakky (Mr. Yasuhito Wakita) of “Penalty,” who are comedians, affiliated with Yoshimoto Kogyo Co., on May 30, 2018, in order to further promote and appeal the activities of KUSANONE, to people in and outside of Japan.

Among their specific activities as Grassroots Ambassadors, “Penalty” visited the local schools and support facilities for migrant workers and disabled people, where grassroots projects are actually taking place, in August 2018 in Thailand. They interacted with the local people, using their skills in soccer and the Thai language, and paid a courtesy call to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Furthermore, in addition to appearing in interviews in the November 2018 edition of the “International Development Journal” and the December edition of the JICA PR magazine “MUNDI,” in February 2019, they performed in the One World Festival, one of the largest international cooperation events in West Japan, where they promoted and appealed the activities of KUSANONE in an easy-to-understand and entertaining style.