

The Power of JICA Volunteers – Change the World, Change Japan –

On the occasion of the 60th anniversary, we present messages received from various partners as well as current and former Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV).

Voices from Government Leaders in Host Countries



Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Harini Amarasuriya

I extend my appreciation to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Volunteer Program for its continued contribution to Sri Lanka's development efforts. Since 1981, JICA Volunteers (JOCV) have served as a bridge between Japan and Sri Lanka. Their work in education, health, rural development, and youth empowerment has supported community development and strengthened bilateral cooperation. On behalf of the government and the people of Sri Lanka, I express our gratitude for this long-standing partnership and the continued support extended by Japan through JICA. We look forward to further collaboration that advances mutual growth and sustainable development.

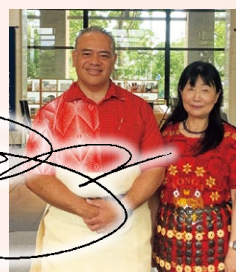
Harini Amarasuriya

Prime Minister of Belize, John Antonio Briceño

It is with great pleasure that I join countries worldwide in congratulating the Government of Japan on the 60th Anniversary of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program. Recognized as one of the oldest volunteer organizations in the world, the JOCV has proven its commitment to nation-building, a commitment shared by my administration. In the JOCV's 25 years of operation in Belize, 210 Japanese volunteers have contributed significantly to areas like the environment, sports, education and the inclusivity of children with disabilities. On behalf of the Government and People of Belize, I express our heartfelt appreciation to the Government and People of Japan, along with our commitment to strengthen the ties of friendship, cooperation and mutual respect which bind both our countries.



John Antonio Briceño



Ambassador of Tonga to Japan, Tevita Suka Mangisi

The JOCV programme is a means towards strengthening, sustaining, and securing Tonga-Japan relations at all levels. My own personal experience was with my math teacher, Ms. Chimoto Fukagawa nee Ogata who was assigned to Tonga High School in 1987. Almost 40 years later, we met again and are working together in areas including disaster education, and sustainable agriculture, through an NPO called Terra People's Association (TPA) of which she is one of the Directors. The relationship is a direct result of the JOCV carried forward by a kizuna between a JOCV teacher and her student.

The author (left) and Ms. Fukagawa

Voice from Corporate Supporters

TOPPAN Holdings Inc., President & CEO, MARO Hideharu



An employee working on an environmental awareness workshop as an environmental education volunteer in Malaysia (Photo: TOPPAN Holdings Inc.)

I extend my heartfelt congratulations on the 60th anniversary of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs). Since FY2013, our company has utilized the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (Partnership Program), and to date a cumulative total of 19 employees have been dispatched as JOCVs to countries around the world. Through their activities in the field, our dispatched employees have cultivated autonomous leadership that transcends differences in culture and business practices, and they continue to make an active contribution upon their return to Japan by drawing on what they have learned. I would like to express my deepest respect to all those who have long supported the JOCV program, which fosters a mindset for tackling social challenges and contributes to the "human resource development" that drives the global business of Japanese companies. I look forward to the continued further development of the JOCV program as it paves the way for the future of the world and Japan.



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Voices from Host Institutions

Federation of Japanese Association in Paraguay, President, ISHIDA Miguel

I extend my heartfelt congratulations on the 60th anniversary of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs). Dispatch to Paraguay began in 1978 with the arrival of three volunteers, and as the first country in South America to receive volunteers, the relationship has spanned 47 years, laying a foundation for friendship between Japan and Paraguay. Involvement with the Nikkei community began in 1980 with the arrival of physical education and music volunteers to the Pirapo Settlement in the southeast, and since then many volunteers have been active across diverse fields, making significant contributions in areas such as Japanese language education, elderly welfare, and human resource development. I express my sincere respect and deep gratitude for these years of dedicated efforts. As 2026 marks the 90th anniversary of Japanese immigration to Paraguay, I respectfully request your continued support and the ongoing dispatch of volunteers.



Founder/Professor, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), India; Former Member of Parliament Achyuta Samanta

I extend heartfelt congratulations to JICA on the 60th Anniversary of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program. Japan's ODA has profoundly enriched our institutions through dedicated JOCV volunteers who have fostered deep cultural bonds between India and Japan. The partnership with JICA exemplifies grassroots international cooperation at its finest. JICA volunteers in Japanese Language education have empowered students through the Japan Ready-Industry Ready program, while rugby coaches have transformed sports development at our campuses, creating competitive and inclusive environments. We deeply value JICA's philosophy of human resource development, mutual respect, and grassroots engagement. The volunteers' dedication to knowledge sharing aligns perfectly with our mission of inclusive education and social empowerment. We look forward to strengthening this partnership and contributing together to a more connected, prosperous, and harmonious world.

Achyuta Samanta

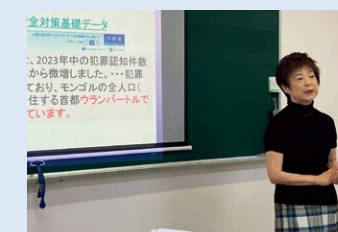
Messages from Current and Former JOCVs

Active Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) in Community Development, Dispatched to Rwanda, "Water Security Action Team (W-SAT)," ISHIKAWA Mayu

The "Water Security Action Team (W-SAT)" has been working to ensure safe water access for local residents, including through the maintenance and management of wells and spring water sources. I took over the activities of my predecessors and work with Rwanda's Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC) to build a system for delivering well parts from the capital to rural villages. Every time a resident I was meeting for the first time called out "JICA!" with a smile, I was reminded that the achievements of the JOCVs, built up over many years, were still alive in the field in the form of trust. Now that we have reached the 60th anniversary, I intend to continue to sincerely reflect on the path the volunteers have walked and to think about how to provide support that better aligns with the realities of each community.



The author (second from left) celebrating with the village chief after the successful completion of well repairs



The author teaching a class in preparation for a debate competition at a Japanese-style technical college (KOSEN) in Mongolia (Photo: JICA)

Former Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) Japanese Language Education, Dispatched to Mongolia SAKURAI Chiyoko

I still remember standing in front of a classroom in Mongolia for the first time 31 years ago. I was searching for what I, as an inexperienced teacher, could offer to the first generation of students who were now free to study Japanese after democratization. The frustration of not being able to contribute as fully as I wished, and the joy of deeply connecting with the people of that country when living among them, became a turning point, leading me to continue to teach Japanese abroad ever since. Two years ago, I returned to Mongolia as a volunteer once again. I have come to realize that the JOCV program broadens one's horizons in life, and is a place where one can discover a new side of oneself at any age.