Reconstruction and development efforts got underway in Uganda in 2006 after the start of peace negotiations with the opposition forces following lengthy domestic conflict. The biggest challenge was developing northern Uganda, the center of the insurgency.

Japan’s focus shifted from emergency and humanitarian assistance to reconstruction and development following the peace negotiations. In 2009, JICA twice dispatched a study group to prepare for a project in northern Uganda, the region most devastated by the conflict.

The impact of the war was particularly apparent in the Amuru District, where the return of internally displaced persons was slow. To facilitate their return and resettlement, JICA helped examine the state of the road network and create a road improvement plan. Under a pilot project, roads were repaired and improved and bridges were replaced. The project included a workshop in March 2010 to formulate a master plan for road safety and maintenance. This outlined the restoration of road functionality between Otwee and Anaka and between Otwee and Wib Anaka as a priority task, which included replacing bridges linking these cities. Efforts got underway in April. The aims of the project are to help refugees return home, enable the distribution of agricultural goods and improve access to the district capital.

In addition to establishing roads and bridges, plans are in place to develop local infrastructure needed for resettlement, including construction of facilities for water supply, schools and health service facilities.
The north-south Sudanese civil war ended in January 2005 following more than 20 years of conflict. The country has been devastated, however, with the people suffering immeasurable hardships and faced with almost no opportunity for education.

JICA commenced a project to foster leaders capable of rebuilding southern Sudan a year and a half after the conclusion of a peace agreement.

Ugandan Instructors Assist with Vocational Training

Around 4.6 million people are thought to have escaped conflict-stricken areas during the civil war, both to other parts of Sudan and abroad. Opportunities for education were lost to a large degree to those that stayed behind in southern Sudan as a result.

Due to low levels of technical expertise among the local population following the war, the majority of the workforce is made up of people from nearby countries. Vocational training facilities were closed during the war and the capabilities of instructors declined while the curriculum remained unchanged for over 30 years and there were no educational guidelines. In order for rehabilitation projects to invigorate the local economy, it was necessary to nurture as many engineers as possible as well as people who could lead the restoration of southern Sudan on their own.

In response to a request from the Sudanese government, JICA initiated a project in southern Sudan in 2006 a year and a half after the signing of a peace agreement. The aims of the project were to ensure that trainees, including refugees returning home, made full use of the technology gained to make their lives better, and that trained engineers contribute to rehabilitation and peacebuilding.

As part of the project, JICA helped strengthen the capabilities of the Juba Multi-Service Training Centre, the core vocational training centre for the future, as well as of non-formal training providers (NGOs, etc.), who provide short-term training focused on technology that directly benefits people’s lives. Support included the provision of necessary materials and equipment, and facility renovations. Based on the idea “from African to African” when transferring teaching methods and upgrading educational materials, Ugandan instructors from the Nakawa Vocational Training Institute, which JICA has supported for many years, assisted with the training of 3,861 Sudanese in such areas as automotive mechanics, sheet-metal processing and welding, plumbing, electrical wiring, air conditioning, carpentry, construction, office administration, computer, tailoring, food processing and hotel services. A follow-up survey conducted in October 2009 showed that 70% of trainees found employment or started their own businesses within six months of graduation and boosted their income by 138%.

JICA responded to new training demands by harnessing experiences from the first three years of the project. This included incorporating a short-term training course for ex-combatants who have been demobilized and the general population as the first reintegration activity among the donor agencies in order to enhance disarmament, demobilization and social reintegration pursuant to the peace agreement.

A Grassroots View

Awut Deng Acuil, Minister of Labour, Public Service and Human Resources

There was a vacuum in education in southern Sudan because of the war and people with technical expertise were extremely hard to find. We even had to depend on other countries for unskilled labor, which meant that Sudanese couldn’t get work and prices increased. Vocational training is therefore critical for the advancement of southern Sudan.

A Grassroots View

Ex-Combatant Trainee

I was completely at a loss as to how to live after being discharged. Fortunately, now I have the confidence to be independent and support my family thanks to skills gained from training.