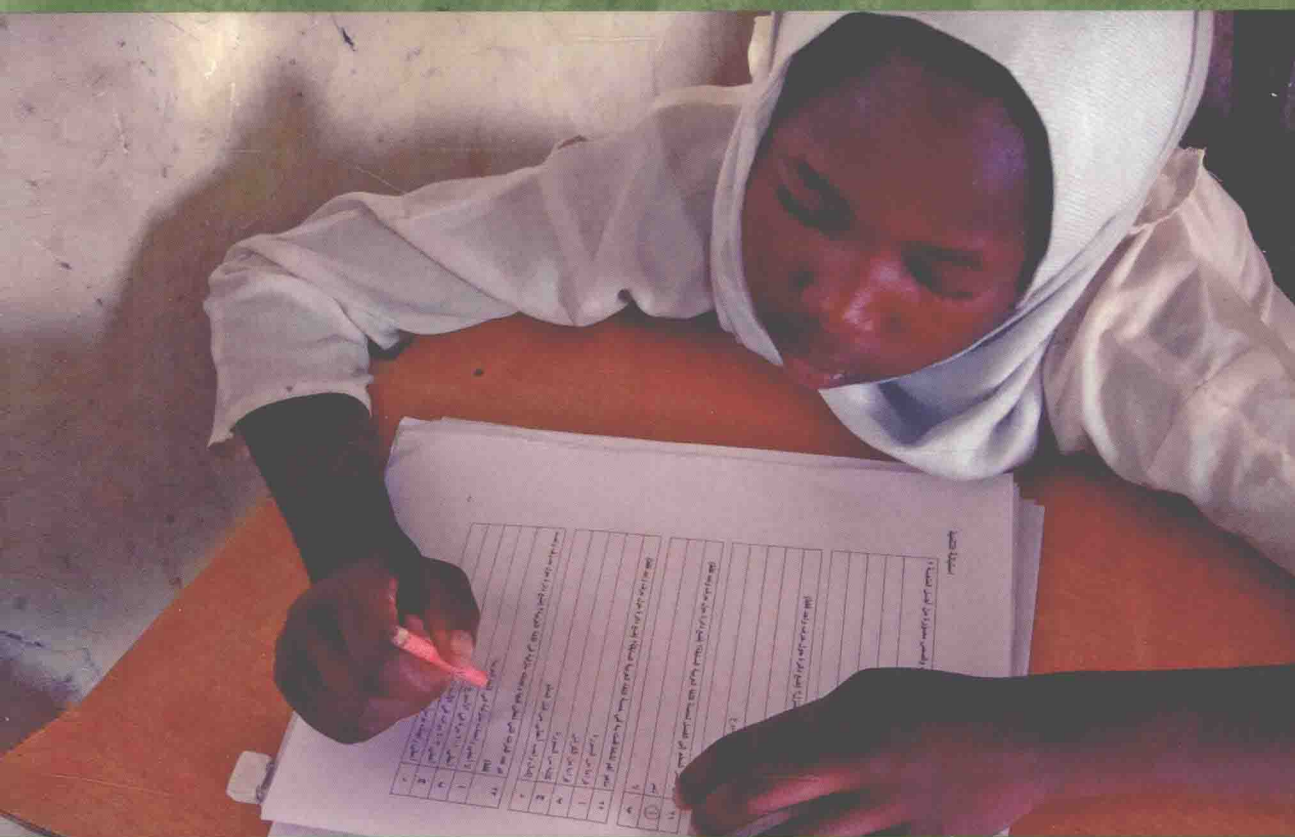


AFRICA HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SERIES



The Status of the Education Sector in Sudan



THE WORLD BANK

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Foreword

As the Republic of Sudan embarks upon a new phase in its history, its government has reaffirmed its commitment to achieve the Education for All (EFA) targets and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—if not by 2015, then soon thereafter. This year, the Government of National Unity is preparing a new education sector strategic plan, for 2012–16, that will set the direction for reform and investment in basic, secondary, and higher education over the coming five years. The aim of the current report is to contribute to the knowledge base that informs the preparation of this plan by providing a diagnostic of the country's education system. With detailed data on enrollments, teachers, learning outcomes, and education financing, the report contextualizes valuable information about the challenges and emerging priorities for Sudan's education sector.

The positive impact of peace on education following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in 2005 is evidenced in the substantial increase in basic school enrollments among those previously affected by conflict. In absolute terms, enrollments in basic education grew by almost 1.6 million in the eight years since the 2000–01 academic year. However, regional disparities in education access exist. Also, children in rural areas, children from poorer households, and girls are at a disadvantage in terms of access to schooling. The strongest predictor of access to schooling is whether a child lives in an urban or rural area, with urban children being 17 percentage points more likely than rural children to access school. Preliminary estimates also suggest low basic education coverage of internally displaced persons and nomadic populations. There are also indications of inadequate literacy and numeracy among students based on a learning assessment administered as part of this analysis in 195 government schools across three states. These weak

learning outcomes could be linked to many factors, including widespread malnutrition among young children (which has consequences for learning ability), too few instructional hours, and a lack of textbooks. Finally, primary school completion rates are low: whereas roughly 80 percent of children were enrolled in grade 1 in 2008, only about 50 percent of students completed basic education, indicating that a large number of students are dropping out of school.

Secondary education also has a high number of students who drop out, and it has a large number of students who are repeaters. As many as 36 percent of students in the final year of secondary school are estimated to be repeaters, giving a repetition rate of 15 percent across the secondary level. Nevertheless, the estimated transition rates between basic and secondary education and between secondary and higher education of 74 percent and about 87 percent, respectively, are fairly high, and they indicate that most pupils drop out of the education system within the basic or secondary levels rather than between the levels. With such high transition rates, the current expansion in basic school enrollments (and assuming that the dropout rate improves) is likely to result in considerable pressure on secondary education, technical and vocational training, and higher education systems, which will need to accommodate a rapidly increasing number of basic school graduates seeking to continue their studies. Whether the system is able to respond to this increased pressure will determine whether the transition rates can remain at these high levels in the years ahead.

From a regional perspective, enrollment in higher education is higher in Sudan than in other Sub-Saharan African countries and is similar to that in Middle Eastern and North African countries. The gender parity index for higher education in Sudan is also similar to that for countries in the Middle East and North Africa, and accounted for 56 percent of enrollment in higher education in 2009. Given the relatively high enrollment rate in higher education, it is important that while in the education system, students acquire the skills that match those needed by the labor market to contribute to economic growth and development in the country. Further research, including a labor market survey, is required to understand and strengthen the links between the skills imparted to higher education students and the skills required to support the expansion and diversification of the economy.

The independence of South Sudan and the expiration of the CPA are likely to lead to a significant decline in government financing. All sectors—including education—will be affected by this contraction, placing at risk the significant gains of the last decade. Maintaining the momentum and

expanding the existing education system will require a commitment to promote a strong, efficient, equity-oriented approach to service delivery. Sudan's upcoming education sector plan will highlight priorities and can be used to mobilize both internal and external financing. The analytic foundation that this report provides and its identification of the key bottlenecks to progress are thus both timely and relevant.

This report was prepared in collaboration with a national team from the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) and partners active in the education sector in Sudan. The MoGE's national team, led by the undersecretary of the federal MoGE, comprised representatives from both the federal and state levels. Over a period of 18 months, this collaboration facilitated considerable capacity building in data collection and analysis, as well as regular dissemination of the analysis to a wider audience.

This publication is the first comprehensive overview of the education sector in Sudan. The challenge that remains is to design policy responses to the issues identified within the forthcoming education sector strategic plan. More important, these policies—already being discussed with the MoGE—must be effectively implemented so that Sudan can make faster progress toward achieving the EFA targets and MDGs. It is my hope that this report will serve as the basis for an evidence-based and equity-oriented approach to education planning and investment. This approach will have positive repercussions for overall economic growth, poverty alleviation, and human development in 21st-century Sudan.

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Acknowledgments

This report was prepared by the World Bank and the Government of National Unity (GoNU) of Sudan. The GoNU team worked under the overall guidance of a management committee headed by Dr. El Mustassim El Hassan, undersecretary of the Ministry of General Education (MoGE).¹ The GoNU team comprised Dr. El Tahir Hassan El Tahir, director general for the Planning Unit of the federal MoGE; Dr. Ibttissam M. Hassan, director general for the Teacher-Training Unit of the federal MoGE, and the director generals of all the state ministries of education. Other team members within the GoNU included Dr. Khaled El Amin El Mosharaf, Omar Alebied Ahmed, and Najla Basheer. The team wishes to express gratitude to Mrs. Souad Abelrazig, State Minister of the MoGE for her leadership in finalizing this book.

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NOTE

1. Established under Administrative Order 22 in 2009, the management committee provided overall strategic guidance in the preparation of the education sector report for northern Sudan.

Abbreviations

CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
EFA-FTI	Education for All Fast-Track Initiative
ESPA	Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement
ESR	education sector report
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
EU	European Union
FMoGE	Federal Ministry of General Education
GDP	gross domestic product
GER	gross enrollment rate
GIR	gross intake rate
GoNU	Government of National Unity
GoSS	Government of Southern Sudan
GPI	gender parity index
IDP	internally displaced person
IEC	internal efficiency coefficient
ISeti	in-service education training institute
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoFNE	Ministry of Finance and National Economy
MoGE	Ministry of General Education
MoHESR	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
MoLPSHR	Ministry of Labor, Public Service and Human Resource Development
NCTTE	National Council for Technical and Technological Education
PCR	primary completion rate
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SDG	Sudanese pound

SDS	service delivery survey (“Quality of Service Delivery in Basic Education Study”)
SHHS	Sudan Household Health Survey
SLE	school life expectancy
SOU	Sudan Open University
STR	student-teacher ratio
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund

Map: States Featured in This Study, Sudan, 2010

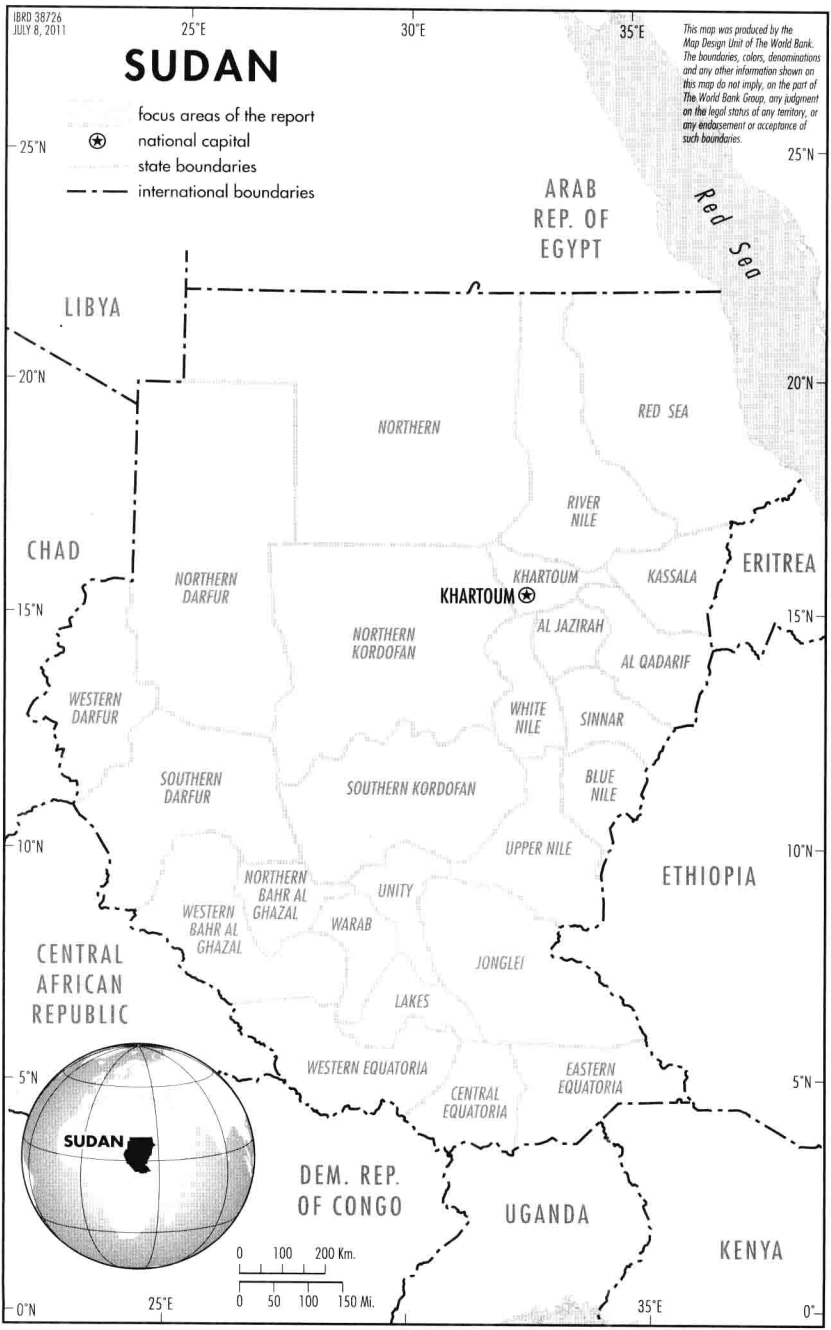


Table of Contents

Foreword xiii

Acknowledgments xvii

Abbreviations xix

Map: States Featured in This Study, Sudan, 2010 xxi

OVERVIEW

1

The Main Findings 2

Equity-Oriented Education Spending 14

Conclusion 15

Notes 16

References 16

CHAPTER 1. SETTING THE SCENE

19

Scope of This Education Sector Status Report 19

Administrative Structure of General Education in Northern Sudan 26

Annex 1A: Population by Age in 2008 28

Annex 1B: Administrative Structure of the Education System 30

Notes 33

References 34

CHAPTER 2. OVERALL ENROLLMENT PATTERNS

37

Structure of the Education System and Enrollments 37

Schools for Nomadic and Internally Displaced Populations 47

The Gross Enrollment Rate 49

Measuring Education Coverage More Precisely 53

Summary 55

Annex: Number of Basic Schools 56

Notes 57

References 58

CHAPTER 3. PATTERNS OF STUDENT FLOW	59
Schooling Profile and Distance from Universal Primary Completion	59
Other Aspects of Student Flow Efficiency and Projections	68
Projection of Access and Completion Rates for Basic Education	75
Summary	77
Annex: Basic and Secondary Education Enrollments	78
Notes	79
References	79
 CHAPTER 4. DISPARITIES	 81
Regional Disparities	81
Social Disparities	85
Out-of-School Children in Urban and Rural Areas	92
Structural Disparities	93
Summary	97
Annex 4A: Enrollment of Girls in Education in Northern Sudan	99
Annex 4B: Probability of Children Ever Enrolling in Basic School	99
Notes	100
References	101
 CHAPTER 5. SERVICE DELIVERY AND LEARNING OUTCOMES IN BASIC SCHOOLS IN THREE STATES	 103
Sample Description	105
Characteristics of Government Basic Schools in the Sample	107
Student Learning Outcomes	119
Secondary Education Examination Results	125
Summary	129
Annex: Probability of Still Being in School by Grade 8	130
Notes	131
References	131
 CHAPTER 6. TEACHERS	 133
Profile of Teachers in Northern Sudan	133
Teacher Recruitment, Deployment, and Transfer	140
Teacher Utilization	144
School Record Keeping: Teacher Leave and Time/Attendance	147
Teacher Supervision	150
Teacher Salaries and Motivation	153
Summary	155

Notes	156
References	156

CHAPTER 7. EDUCATION FINANCE **159**

Background	159
Analysis of Public Education Spending	161
Public Per-Student Spending	168
Analysis of State-Level Education Spending	174
Summary	182
Annex: Spending on Education	183
Notes	187
References	188

APPENDIX: STATE-LEVEL DATA SHEETS **191**

GLOSSARY **237**

BOXES

1.1 Education Sector Status Report Data Sources	20
7.1 State Visits to Collect Information on Education Spending	160

FIGURES

O.1 Average Annual Growth Rates for Basic School Enrollment, by State, 2004–05 to 2008–09	3
O.2 Educational Access: Probability of Ever Enrolling in Basic School, by Location, Income, and Gender, circa 2005	8
O.3 Share of Girls in Enrollments, by Type of Basic School, 2008–09	10
O.4 International Comparisons: Degree of Randomness in Teacher Allocations in Basic Education, by Country	12
O.5 Public Education Spending, by Administrative Level, 2000–09	14
1.1 Growth of GDP per Capita in Sudan, 1975–2008	22
1A.1 Raw Population Data in Sudan, Ages 0–24 Years, 2008	28
1A.2 Raw and Smoothed Population Data in Sudan, Ages 2–24 Years, 2008	29
1B.1 Organizational Structure of the FMoGE	31
1B.2 Ministries Providing Technical and Vocational Training	32
2.1 Trends in Student Enrollments in Northern Sudan, 2000–01 to 2008–09	40
2.2 Evolution in Basic School Enrollments in Selected States, 2000–01 to 2008–09	41
2.3 Average Growth Rates for Basic School Enrollments, by State, 2004–05 to 2008–09	41

2.4	Share of Students Enrolled in Nongovernment Schools, 2008–09 or Latest Available Year	44
2.5	Trends in Gross Enrollment Rates for General Education in Northern Sudan, 2000–01 to 2008–09	51
2.6	Comparing the Gross Enrollment Rate Calculated from Different Sources, 2005–06 to 2008–09	55
3.1	Schooling Profile for the Primary and Secondary Levels, 2008–09	60
3.2	Educational Pyramid for Northern Sudan, 2008–09	61
3.3	Access to Grade 1: Share of Population between Ages 5 and 29 Who Had Ever Accessed Basic School, 2005–06	63
3.4	Ages of Girls and Boys Attending Grade 1, 2005–06	64
3.5	Enrollment Status of Girls and Boys by Age, 2005–06	66
3.6	Schooling Status and Level of Education of Girls and Boys by Age, 2005–06	67
3.7	School Life Expectancy in Sudan and Comparator Countries, Latest Available Year	68
3.8	International Comparison of the Share of Repeaters in Primary and Secondary Schools, Latest Available Year	71
3.9	Projection of the Rate of Access and Completion of Basic Education to 2015	76
4.1	Access: Regional Disparities in the Share of Children between Ages 5 and 17 Who Had Ever Accessed Basic School, 2005–06	84
4.2	Ratio of Boys to Girls in the Basic School-Age Population, by State, 2008	87
4.3	Access: Probability of Ever Enrolling in Basic School (Grade 1) according to Location, Income, and Gender, circa 2005	89
4.4	Retention: Probability of Still Being in School by Grade 8, by Location, Income, and Gender, circa 2005	91
4.5	Schooling Status of Urban and Rural Children by Age, 2005–06	93
4.6	Lorenz Curve for the Distribution of Public Education Spending, 2008–09	96
5.1	Grade 5 Student Learning Assessment Scores in Mathematics and Reading in Kassala, North Kordofan, and River Nile, 2009	120
5.2	International Comparison of Student Performance in Mathematics between Morocco, Northern Sudan, Singapore, and Tunisia, 2008–09	122
5.3	International Comparison of Student Performance in Reading between Benin, Northern Sudan, and Singapore, 2008–09	123
5.4	Average Student Performance in Mathematics and Reading, by Household Wealth, 2009	126
5.5	Average Student Performance in Mathematics and Reading, by Father's Education Level, 2009	127
6.1	Types of Staff in Northern Sudan, by Education Level, 2009	135
6.2	Percentage of Female and Male Teachers in Basic Education in Northern Sudan, by State, 2009	136
6.3	Percentage of Female and Male Teachers in Secondary Education in Northern Sudan, by State, 2009	136

6.4	Percentage of Trained and Untrained Teachers in Northern Sudan, by State, 2009	139
6.5	Full-Time Government Teachers' Academic Qualifications and Preservice Training in Kassala, North Kordofan, and River Nile States, 2009	139
6.6	Number of Teachers in Relation to Student Enrollment in Basic Education Schools in Northern Sudan, 2008–09	141
6.7	Number of Teachers in Relation to Student Enrollment in Basic Education Schools, Red Sea State, 2008–09	142
6.8	International Comparisons: Randomness in Teacher Allocations in Basic Education, by Country	143
6.9	Average Number of Leave Days by Purpose over Six Months in Kassala, North Kordofan, and River Nile States, 2009	149
6.10	Local Supervision: Visits to the Teachers in Kassala, North Kordofan, and River Nile States, 2009	152
6.11	Payment of Teacher Salaries in Kassala, North Kordofan, and River Nile States, by Teacher Type, 2009	153
7.1	Recurrent Public Education Spending per School-Age Child, 2000–09	162
7.2	Comparison of Public Education Spending, by Country, 2005–08	163
7.3	Development and Recurrent Public Education Spending Shares, 2000–09	164
7.4	Public Education Spending, by Administrative Level, 2000–09	165
7.5	Composition of Recurrent Public Education Spending, by Education Level, 2009	168
7.6	State Education Spending as a Share of State Total Public Spending, 2009	176
7.7	Average Public Per-Student Spending, by GER Group, 2009	177
7.8	Public Per-Student Spending, by Education Level and State, 2009	178
7.9	Federal Transfers and State Own Revenues as a Share of Total Revenues, 2008	180
7.10	Federal Transfers per Capita and Average GER, by State, 2008–09	181

TABLES

O.1	Anthropometric Measures of Sudan's Children	11
1.1	Trends in GoNU Revenues and Expenditures, 2000–09	23
1.2	Anthropometric Measures of Sudan's Children	25
1A.1	Population of Sudan by Census Year and Average Growth in Intervening Years, 1956–2008	28
1B.1	Availability of Job Descriptions in the FMOGE	31
2.1	Trends in Student Enrollments by Level of Education in Northern Sudan, 2000–01 to 2008–09	38
2.2	Increase in the Number of Schools, Teachers, and Students from 2004–05 to 2008–09	43
2.3	School Size and Student-Teacher Ratios in Government and Nongovernment Schools, 2008–09	46

2.4	Number of Schools and Enrollments in Government Nomadic, IDP, and Village Schools, 2007–08 and 2008–09	48
2.5	Primary Education GERs in Northern Sudan and Comparator Countries, 2008 or Latest Available Year	52
2.6	Upper Secondary Education GERs in Northern Sudan and Comparator Countries, 2008 or Latest Available Year	53
2.7	Higher Education Enrollments in Northern Sudan and Comparator Countries, 2008 or Latest Available Year	54
2A.1	Number of Basic Schools by State and Type of School, 2008–09	56
3.1	Gross Intake Rate and Primary Completion Rate, 2008–09	62
3.2	Basic School Intake and Completion Rates Based on Two Data Sources, 2005–06	63
3.3	Share of Repeaters in Basic Schools from Different Sources, 2005–06 to 2008–09	69
3.4	Estimation of Repetition in Government and Nongovernment Academic Secondary Schools, 2008–09	70
3.5	Retention and Other Indicators for Basic and Secondary Education, 2000–01 to 2008–09	72
3.6	Internal Efficiency Coefficients in Basic and Secondary Education, 2005–06 to 2008–09	74
3.7	International Comparison of Internal Efficiency Coefficients in Basic Education	75
3.8	Gross Intake and Primary Completion Rates for Basic Education, 2000–01 to 2008–09	76
3A.1	Enrollments by Grade in Basic and Secondary Education, Northern Sudan, 2008–09	78
4.1	Comparison of GERs in Preschool, Basic, and Secondary Schools across States, 2008–09	82
4.2	Share of Girls in Enrollments by Level of Education, 2000–01 and 2008–09	85
4.3	Share of Girls in Enrollments by Type of Basic School, 2008–09	86
4.4	Gender Disparities at All Levels of Education, 2008–09	87
4.5	International Comparison of Gender Parity Index by Level of Education, Latest Available Year	88
4.6	Access: Interaction of Gender with Poverty and Rurality	90
4.7	Retention: Interaction of Gender with Poverty and Rurality	92
4.8	Estimated Number of 10- to 17-Year-Olds in Northern Sudan Who Have Never Been in School, by Gender, 2008	94
4.9	Distribution of Public Education Spending among Members of the Same Cohort, 2008–09	95
4.10	Distribution of Public Spending on Education within a Cohort of Children, Northern Sudan Compared to Sub-Saharan Africa, 2008–09	97
4A.1	Share of Girls in Total Enrollments, by State and Level of Education, 2008–09	99