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3.1.2. Nuba from the Kordofans

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: June 2025

This sub-profile refers to the Nuba minority, a group of 3.7 million people divided into more than 50 autonomous and ethnically diverse communities inhabiting and originating from the Nuba mountains, in South Kordofan.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports and query: Country Focus 2024, 1.2.4., 2.3., 2.5.; Country Focus 2025, 2.5.; Security 2025, 2.3.; COI Update 2025, 4.. Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The majority of the SPLM-N-al-Hilu is composed of Nuba who control most parts of the Nuba mountains in South Kordofan. The armed group has formally remained neutral until February 2025 when, together with RSF and 22 other ‘smaller rebel movements, and political and civil society groups’, they signed an alliance aiming to establish a parallel government in RSF-controlled areas. Before the alliance the SPLM-N-al-Hilu had occasional fights with both sides of the conflict. In addition, Nuba people form a large part of SAF local troops, notably of the Dilling’s SAF garrison. On the other side, the RSF took advantage of the divisions within the local ethnic minorities to mobilise Arab local tribes from South Kordofan, primarily the Hawazma, and recruiting them on a racial basis and with promises of land grabbing. However, the situation remains fluid (e.g. reported defection, ending of the neutrality, shifting side). See the chapter on 2. Actors of persecution or serious harm.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which persons falling under this profile could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. Examples of ethnically driven violence against the Nuba include killings, sexual violence, kidnappings, forced disappearances, unlawful detentions and forced displacements. Reports indicate that the RSF and allied militias carried out attacks on localities and burned down villages in South and West Kordofan resulting in hundreds of deaths within the Nuba communities. The SAF and affiliated forces were also reported to have carried out retaliatory and ethnically-driven attacks against civilians targeting the Nuba communities, particularly in Al Jazirah state. Deaths due to starvation and malnutrition were also reported in the area.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for a Nuba to face persecution should take into account risk-impacting circumstances, such as:

- **Political profile/visibility:** Nuba people with a political profile or a visible role or profession in their community are more likely to be targeted. For more details on community leaders, please refer to 3.5. Community leaders, human rights activists, and lawyers.

- **Area of residence:** regarding the shifting alliances and internal divisions among the main actors, exacerbated by the alliance signed between the SPLM-N-al-Hilu and the RSF in February 2025, Nuba individuals residing in disputed areas between the RSF and the SAF are exposed to a higher risk of being targeted.

- **Displacement:** individuals who have been forcibly displaced are more likely to be targeted with ethnically-driven violence.

- **Gender:** due to the general situation of women and girls in Sudan and, in particular in conflict-affected areas6 where sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war by both parties in the conflict, Nuba women and girls are at higher risk. Please refer to 3.9.1. Violence against women and girls.

- **Age:** considering the prevalence of child recruitment in the current conflict, Nuba children are exposed to a higher risk. For more details, please refer to 3.10.1. Child recruitment.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for individuals under this sub-profile, this is highly likely to be for reasons of **race and/or nationality** as the violence is ethnically-driven. Persecution may also be for reasons of **(imputed) political opinion** as, depending on the place of residence and the political position of the local community, Nuba individuals can be seen as supporters of the opposing warring party by the SAF or the RSF and their allies.

In addition, conflict related sexual violence (CRSV), reported against women and girls, may also have a political motive as it is used as a weapon of war by the RSF and its allies. See also 3.9.1. Violence against women and girls.

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Conflict-affected areas include regions assessed under ’mere presence‘ category, ’high level of indiscriminate violence‘ category as well as ’not a high-level category‘. See b) Assessment of indiscriminate violence per region.

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