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3.2. Individuals fearing forced recruitment by the RSF

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: June 2025

This profile refers to individuals who are targeted by the RSF for forced recruitment, either as combatants, logistical support personnel, or for other military-related roles.

For child recruitment, see 3.10.1. Child recruitment.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports and query: Country Focus 2024, 1.1.3 (e); Country Focus 2025, 2.2.; Security 2025, 1.2.1. (c); COI Update 2025, 2.1.. Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

In areas under RSF control, the group relies heavily on tribal affiliations for recruitment. In 2024, the RSF leader reportedly called for a ‘general mobilisation’ in Darfur and the Kordofans to enlist one million fighters, primarily along tribal lines, to be deployed to conflict zones such as Khartoum, North Darfur, and Al Jazirah. As part of its recruitment campaigns, the RSF frames its fight as 'fighting for democracy' or a 'sacred duty'. Additionally, the group invokes *Faza’a*, ‘an ancient’ pre-Islamic Sudanese tradition that allows tribes to rally their members and allies against attacks by other tribes or to take revenge for killings. Some elements within the RSF continued to pursue an ideology of ‘Arab supremacy’ upheld by the *Janjaweed* militias in the 2000s.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Forced recruitment is of such severe nature that it would amount to persecution.

Other acts to which individuals targeted for forced recruitment by the RSF could be exposed are of such a severe nature that they would amount to persecution. Since the outbreak of the conflict in April 2023, the RSF has significantly escalated its forced recruitment campaigns and adopted methods such as public execution and torture, abductions and kidnappings, coercion, particularly in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps. Withholding of

food or medicine is also widely used as a method of coercion. Men and boys taken from their homes, villages, or IDP camps are forced into combat roles under threat of execution or torture.

The consequences of refusing (forced) recruitment would also amount to persecution. In particular, killings, public executions and torture, the withholding of food or medicines and looting against those who refuse to join have been reported. Individuals who attempt to escape forced recruitment have been executed, tortured, or forcibly disappeared.

The consequences of refusing (forced) recruitment could also affect other persons from the targeted community; sources reported torching and looting of villages, sexual violence (with survivors reportedly committing suicide after the assaults), and forced displacement.

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

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for individuals who refused to join the RSF or escaped the forced recruitment, as reported consequences of refusal are very serious (e.g. killings, public executions and torture) and enforced in a widespread and pervasive manner.

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for individuals to be forcibly recruited by the RSF should take into account risk-impacting circumstances, such as:

- **Age and Gender:** young males are exposed to a higher risk, as they are the primary target for the forced recruitment. See also 3.10.1. Child recruitment.

- **Ethnic background:** RSF relies heavily on tribal affiliations for recruitment also locally known as *Faza'a*. RSF recruited Hawazma and Kenana, and Misseriya in South Kordofan, as well as Misseriya and Rizeigat in Darfur by invoking 'Arab, pan-Sahelian tropes that appealed to members of the Al Attawa tribal umbrella'. RSF also recruited young members from ethnic minorities such as Tarjam, Beni Halba, Habbaniyah, Taisha, Sa'ada, Misseriya and Fellata local Arab communities.

- **Displacement:** displaced persons are more vulnerable and exposed to forced recruitment; reportedly RSF is forcibly recruiting male IDPs in North Darfur to bolster its ranks amid increasing losses.

- **Place of residence or origin:** recruitment by the RSF was especially reported in the Darfur and Kordofan regions, and Al Jazirah state.

- **Previous military activity:** SAF veterans are required by the RSF to join their ranks to avoid being detained. Former *Janjaweed* militia members are pressured to join RSF under threat of imprisonment.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

While the risk of forced recruitment as such may not generally imply a nexus to a reason for persecution, the consequences of refusal would lead to persecution which is highly likely to be for reasons of **(imputed) political opinion**, as those refusing to join RSF are often perceived as opposition sympathisers or SAF collaborators.



Exclusion considerations are particularly relevant to this profile, as individuals with past experience within SAF or RSF may have been involved in excludable acts. See 7. Exclusion.

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