

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- 11 NGO staff abducted in 5 separate incidents in the north, west, and east of the country
- More demonstrations in the east due to civilian casualties caused by IMF
- Security may be improving in parts of Logar

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COUNTRY SUMMARY

A preliminary analysis of the impact of conflict and crime on NGOs over the past year is presented below. A complete report with more comprehensive analysis and detailed figures will be provided in the next ANSO Quarterly Report due out in a few weeks.

Over the past year, NGOs were involved in more than 158 security incidents in which 16 people were killed and a further 10 wounded. All were Afghan nationals. The largest percentage of incidents were caused by Armed Opposition Groups (AOG) but crime remains an important factor of NGO insecurity.

While the total number of AOG attacks recorded in Afghanistan this year jumped by approx 40%, it did not translate into more NGO incidents or casualties. There are several reasons for this. First, most of the intense fighting occurred in remote or rural areas where fewer NGO staff were present. Second, in AOG controlled areas, AOG did not usually target NGOs providing that they were perceived as neutral actors.

NGO incidents were more frequent, and often more serious, in newer or expanding conflict areas (often marked in green or yellow on threat maps) due to the sudden increase in violent roadside attacks and the growth in crime that usually soared as policing resources were diverted or rendered less capable.

Half of the NGO deaths reported this year were conflict related (the result of IEDs, airstrikes, and armed attacks). Most of these were caused by roadside bombs intended for government or military targets.

With a few localized exceptions, NGOs were not systematically targeted by AOG this year. This is partly evidenced by the fact that AOG released most of the NGO staff they detained at AOG checkpoints over the past year. More specifically, AOG abducted NGO staff on more than 30 occasions in 15 of 34 provinces and released most within hours or days unharmed. Most of these abductions occurred in provinces under AOG control where they routinely executed GoA employees and suspected spies. In short, the widespread release of NGO abductees in AOG controlled zones is a good indicator that (neutrally perceived) NGOs are not being systematically targeted.

Also, NGO abductees were often only released once AOG had confirmed (via local sources) that the staff belonged to a local and neutral NGO. This confirms once again that neutrality and impartiality are key elements of NGO security in conflict areas and worth preserving despite the “blurring image” problems caused by the militarization of aid by some governmental development organizations, military units and others.

While armed robbery was the most common criminal incident against NGOs this year, murder due to personal (non-work related) disputes was the single greatest cause of death. As noted above, criminal incidents against NGO also tend to go up when AOG activity goes up in a district, probably because policing resources are diverted to counter-insurgency priorities and because police are less able or willing to patrol/respond for fear of being targeted by AOG. In brief, crime tends to be a compounding factor of NGO insecurity in emerging conflict areas.

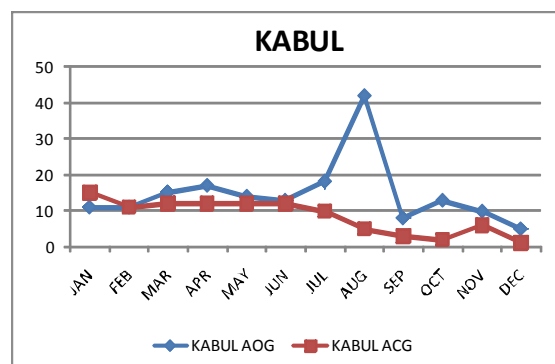
KABUL

Threat reporting increased in the final days of the calendar year, almost solely mentioning SVBIEDs as the intended tactic. Fortunately, the last reporting period of the year ended without a realization of those threats. Since September, there have been five SVBIED detonations in Kabul City. Overall, there have been 11 suicide attacks, either BBIED or SVBIED, in 2009, which compares to seven in 2008 and twenty in 2007. The difference is that the devices used in SVBIEDs are becoming larger and more sophisticated, which have led to a discernible increase in the number of civilian casualties. Civilian fatalities are roughly the same for 2008 and 2009 at 67 and 71 dead respectively, largely as a result of the Indian Embassy bombing in July 2008, which killed approximately 58 people. The difference is in the number of civilians wounded as a result of the massive blasts which have contained up to 250 kilograms of explosives, as the ISAF

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	0

HQ SVBIED in August reportedly weighed. In 2008, there were an estimated 177 civilians wounded compared to 416 in 2009. The larger and more sophisticated devices have penetrated previously thought of secure areas and detonated causing structural damage and breaking windows several hundred metres away. In Kabul city, approximately 21 what could be loosely called combatants to the conflict have been killed in 2009, which represents slightly less than a third of civilian fatalities. Although the attacks could be seen as successfully targeting IMF or ANSF, they inflict a heavy toll on the civilian population. For NGOs, the installation of blast film, heavy curtains on windows and the avoidance of GoA, IMF and foreign representations in the morning hours will substantially reduce the risk of exposure to such attacks.

For the year in Kabul City, NGO security incidents have declined to nine in 2009 from 20 in 2008, while the number of reported security incidents, both AOG and ACG, has remained steady at around 170. Reported robberies of NGO compounds have dropped from six in 2008 to zero in 2009, however robberies in transit to/during or from work



have risen from two to six this year. Tighter security practices as well as risk mitigation measures, which are not one and the same, have also contributed to lower NGO security incidents.

In the districts of Kabul province, anecdotal reporting suggests that the criminal threat is largely derived from former 'commanders' exercising influence at times in competition with one another as well as the ANSF. Barely dormant networks have been awoken to serve the financial interests of commanders with the favoured tactics being intimidation, abduction of businessman, smuggling and robbery. The threat has yet to translate into any NGO security incidents for the year.

Separately, on 17 December a large operation involving approximately 1000 IMF and a contingent of ANSF attempted to clear a path with a 'demonstration of force' in the northern end of the Uzbeen valley in Surobi with the intent to hold a shura with local elders. Reports suggest that five IMF were wounded in the operation. One alleged AOG was killed and three wounded. The shura was not held as the proposed village was understood to be occupied by AOG and an alternative venue could not be found. The operation ended after 36 hours.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- SVBIED attacks around high profile GoA, IMF and foreign representation targets
- ACG abductions
- Car accidents

DID YOU KNOW THAT ANSO CONDUCTS SITE SECURITY REVIEWS?

Within office hours ANSO staff will be available to conduct a security review of any NGO facility (residence, office, sub-office, etc.) and provide feedback on suitability and security concerns. This service will be available on a first come, first served basis.

Contact your Regional Safety Advisor for details (P.16)

LOGAR

The security situation in Logar, according to NGOs operating in the province, has improved significantly from 2008. The change is largely seen as a result of successful IMF as well as ANSF operations which have targeted local AOG commanders responsible for numerous IED and close range attacks, especially in Muhammad Agha and Puli Alam. NGOs have seen increasing acceptance levels in Baraki Barak and Charkh, where previous IMF/AOG clashes made the districts dangerous to operate. The ethnic and tribal homogeneity of the district of Azra as well as its comparative isolation have meant that there have been very few, if any, AOG activities with local leaders embracing autonomy over acceptance of AOG ideology and strategy. In a similar manner, Khushi with its mixed Tajik and Pashtun population remains voluntarily estranged from AOG

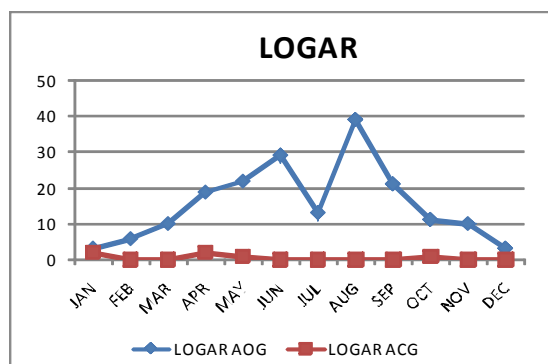
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG/AOG abductions
- IMF operations
- AOG intimidation

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

penetration with only several IEDs recorded against construction companies and a single IED against an ANP vehicle together with a standoff attack against the DAC signaling any form of AOG activity for the whole of 2009.

Separately, the southwestern district of Kharwar retains a light GoA footprint, which has led to a strengthening of AOG nominal control. The absence of the apparatus of the state has emboldened alternative AOG institutions, which have led to increasingly legitimacy of those informal structures at the expense of the GoA. NGO operations continue in Puli Alam and Muhammad Agha without reported hindrance. For NGOs operating in Logar, as is witnessed across the country, NSP projects or otherwise tend only to be successful in unstable environments with the approval or an 'advisory board' of technical experts, local elders and mullahs. Once acceptance is achieved, then both the success of the project and the safety of the NGO staff improve immeasurably. When external actors attempt to influence this fine balance, in the form



of IMF or ANSF, then the project and staff are placed at risk.

More recently, the threat of abduction is perceived to be on the rise; however the threat is believed to emanate from ACG rather than AOG, who target prominent businessman for ransom. The most often used tactic is the setting up of illegal checkpoints using the cover of a PSC. Although perhaps too early to speculate, there appears to be an emerging divide between different AOG factions. Simplistically put, on the one hand, there is one AOG faction that understands the benefits of development and is amenable to NGO programs, who are traditionally from the area. On the other hand, there is another faction that rejects all development projects and is willing to destroy the bridges, schools and clinics surrounding them. The same group is believed to be influenced by foreign elements and be willing to resort to criminal operations, such as abductions, to support their activities. It is not clear at present whether the two factions will continue to coexist and what will be the subsequent effect on NGO operations.

PARWAN

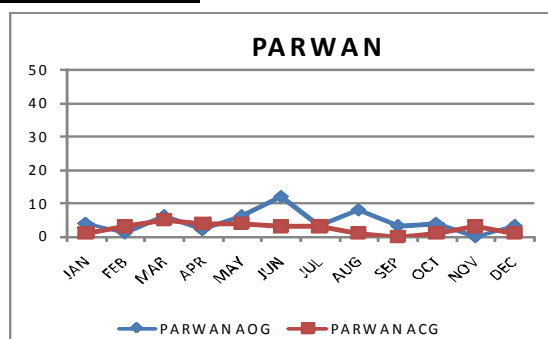
The seasonal slowdown in Parwan is again apparent with no reported ACG or AOG incidents this period. NGOs are operating throughout the province and beyond reports of general intimidations

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG activity in Ghorband Valley
- ACG activity in Chaharikar

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

tion threats, mainly directed against individuals working for GoA and IMF, there have been no specific concerns raised by organizations operating in the area. Community acceptance has been an important factor in NGOs implementing projects, especially in Ghorband, Shinwari and Sheikh Ali where anti-government sentiment appears to be the most prominent.



Crime in the provincial capital does remain a concern, with ACG seemingly well organized and able to operate without prosecution. The perceived rise in criminality has yet to translate into a direct threat to NGOs

KAPISA

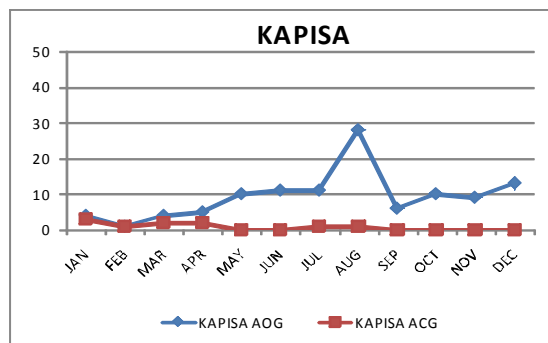
Two international journalists working for a French television station were abducted on 30 December in the Omarkheil area of Tagab. It is understood that the journalists had previously been with IMF and were looking for

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Secondary exposure to clashes between AOG and ANSF/IMF in Tagab
- Low intensity factional disputes in Kohistan I & II

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

additional footage, without any prior assurances from local communities. At this stage it is not clear who abducted the group and where they are currently being held. The area is known to have a significant AOG presence with regular ambushes being conducted against both IMF and ANSF. The recent IMF offensive in Surobi, largely conducted with French forces, may complicate any negotiations for the journalists' release.



In Mahmudi Raqi, an IED was found in Kasban Village on 18 December only a day after two rockets were discovered and defused in Badsha Khel Village, which were believed to be aimed at the provincial capital. NGOs, who mainly operate in the west of the province, have not reported any recent security concerns;

DAYKUNDI

Gizab district, south of the capital Nili, remains the focus of AOG activities in the province. The district also hosts the road to the southern provinces, especially Kandahar and reports continue to be received of temporary AOG abductions of either businessmen

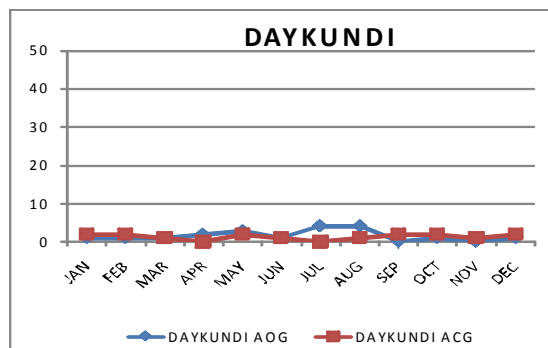
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG/AOG abduction threat in Gizab
- Winter road travel
- Occasional banditry on roads leaving from Nili

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

or truck drivers in exchange for money. Beyond the Tamazan Valley, the district is controlled by AOG who are able to operate with complete freedom of movement. NGO operations in the area have been severely curtailed in response to the deterioration in the security environment.

Separately, having established a PRT base in Nili in late August, it appears that IMF will move beyond Nili with several reports suggesting that Kijran will be a focus of attention in the immediate future. Kijran remains under the



nominal control of AOG, with only several ANSF checkpoints established. Even though the winter weather has well and truly set in, the entry of IMF, if confirmed, may lead to several skirmishes with AOG if the strategy is continued. The rest of the province remains calm with the weather severely affecting travel throughout the province.

NOTICE: Your input is invaluable for the production of this report. While we appreciate information on incidents, we also need general information on the security situation in your area. So please remember to call or email us regularly.

Contact details of ANSO staff are provide on the last page.

ANSO: “..by NGOs for NGOs..”

BAMYAN

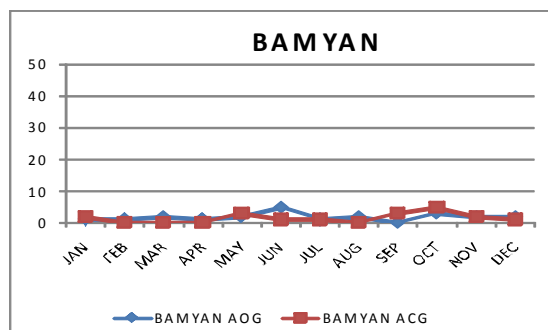
Virtually all security incidents emerging from Bamyan are derived from the Shikari Valley in Shibar District and the Dah Abi Makhzarin Area of Kharmard. The Shikari Valley was again host to another violent robbery on 30 December when a flying coach from Kabul appeared to have attempted to 'run' an ACG checkpoint, leading to the men opening

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Winter road closures
- ACG/AOG activity in the Shikari and Ghandak Valleys

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

fire, killing a child and wounding five other adults. Five serious armed robberies have been reported in the past three months, all based along the road networks and mainly focused along the Shibar to Kharmard road. Separately in Dah Abi Makhzarin Area, the threat is one that could assumed to be AOG, although with reported criminal connections. Regular attacks against ANSF CPs were recorded almost every other week until a slowdown in the past two months.



For the rest of the province, Bamyan remains a safe operating environment with several NGOs planning to set up operations in Yakawlang in 2010. Special attention for road journeys should be made during the winter months and basic planning such as contacting local sources and ANSO's field monitor for road conditions as well as taking adequate supplies in case of unexpected delays or road clo-

WARDAK

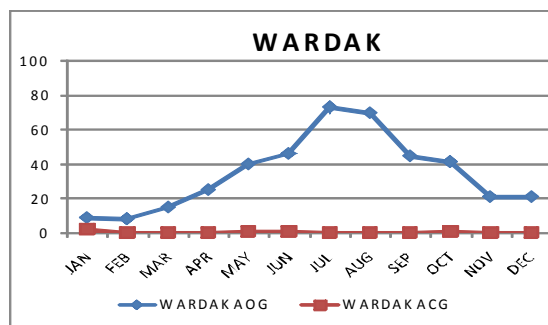
AOG and IMF interests in Wardak converge along Highway One, which passes through Maydan Shahr, Nirkh and Saydabad. Again this was evident in the past reporting period as IMF undertook a series of operations in Nirkh - all within several kilometers of the main road, aimed at arresting or engaging AOG. Five separate raids were recorded, which led to the arrest of several alleged AOG and the deaths of two senior commanders believed responsible for attacks along the highway. A further arrest operation was conducted in Saydabad in the Tangi Valley area, which resulted in four men taken into custody. The frequency of such raids suggests that

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

IMF will continue to amount of offensive operations over the coming winter weeks.

There had been a concern that an operation in Pirdad Village on 26 December, where an AOG commander and five others sought refuge in a mosque, may provoke a backlash. The commander was reportedly killed by a joint ANSF/IMF force and little if any damage was affected to the mosque. AOG in the past have shown their ability in the past to monopolize the narrative, however the event did not lead to any local reaction or demonstrations.

The arrival of new IMF in January is certainly noticeable as there has been an almost four-fold increase (publicly reported as 63) in the level of IMF initiated incidents compared to 2008. In contrast, AOG initiated incidents have risen 44% for 2009 to 414. Of this gross figure, approximately one third of AOG actions have tar-



geted IMF. The remaining two thirds of AOG-initiated incidents represent almost the exact same number recorded against all target groups, including IMF, for 2008. It appears from the data that the increase in the number of foreign soldiers in Wardak in January has served to attract AOG attacks without diminishing their number.

Saydabad remains the most hostile district in the province with 42% of all security incidents in Wardak recorded in the volatile district. Adding to the woes of establishing a degree of control over the district was a public statement by an IMF commander stating that 49 out of 100 ANP had been 'fired' for various offences.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG abductions
- AOG intimidation
- Secondary exposure to IEDs and SAF ambushes targeting IMF/ANSF and logistics con-

BALKH

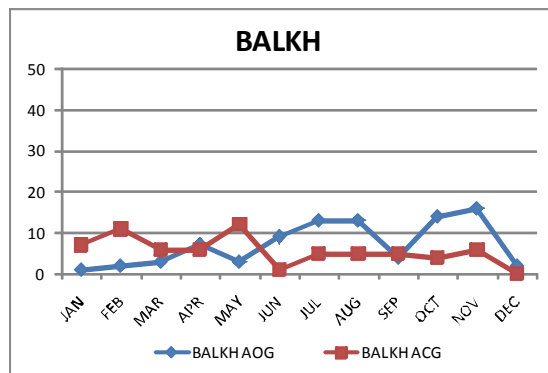
An IED prematurely detonated in the same location on the Shibirgan-Mazar highway as the IED that hit an INGO vehicle in November. The area is a culvert between Aq Tepa and Chahar Sarak, west of the district centre. While this is the second IED to detonate on the main road in the past month, it should be noted that apart from these two incidents, the road is generally secure. In previous reporting periods, IEDs

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ➔ IED on Mazar-Shibirgan Highway

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	11
This Report Period	0

in Chahar Bolak and Chintal districts have been reported only within villages, emplaced in culverts or beneath unpaved roads. The two IEDs that detonated on the main highway were reportedly small and poorly constructed, either suggesting that AOGs in the area have little experience constructing IEDs meant to puncture a concrete surface, or that financially motivated ACGs with little know-how are being paid by AOGs to place the IEDs. No further incidents were reported in Chahar Bolak and Chintal dis-



tricts this period, most likely due to the continued decreased presence of IMF/ANSF forces. AOGs may be focusing efforts on regrouping, resupplying or recuperating from previous periods of confrontation. Elsewhere in Balkh, in Nahri Shahi District, an armed clash erupted over a land dispute. The area, known as Gori Mar, has seen previous clashes over land disputes.

BADAKHSHAN

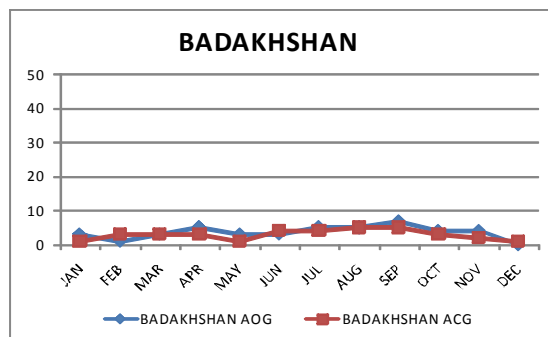
A continued trend of low-level ACG activity was reported throughout Badakhshan Province. In Khwahan District, Afghan National Border Police arrested two suspected smugglers of heroin, and in Argo District ANP arrested

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ➔ Drug smuggling
- ➔ Roadside robbery

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

a suspect with several dozen Kgs of opium. Unknown armed individuals robbed a private vehicle of its cash and valuables in Jurm District. Also in Fayzabad District, ANP arrested an individual who shot and injured an ANP officer. A private communication company in Khash District was met with local unarmed protest from



the community while the company was attempting to construct a compound for its communication tower. Ten of the protesters were arrested by ANP. The protest was likely

JAWZJAN

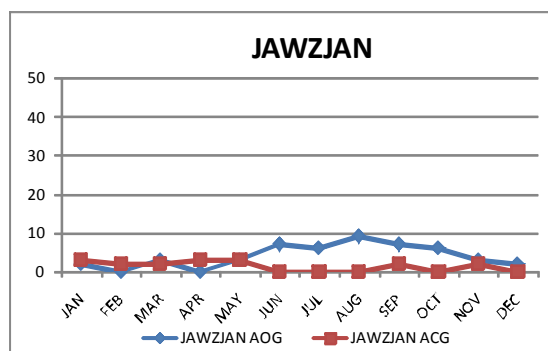
In Feyzabad District of Jawzjan Province, an IED emplaced along a secondary road in Bezak Village was discovered and safely removed. While AOG activity has been noted in the district in the past, this is the first ANSO-recorded IED incident. Previous AOG activity in the district includes occasional SAF attacks on

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ➔ AOG activity in Feyzabad

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

government and civilian vehicles, and one fatal attack on an ANP checkpoint reported in September. AOG activity in Feyzabad is thought to be linked to AOGs in western Balkh. No incidents were reported in Qush Tepa or Darzab districts; however, this is likely due to a lack of GoA presence in the area.



BAGHLAN

Five national staff members of an INGO were abducted while traveling from Dahan-e Ghor District to Pul-e Khumri. The group was stopped by a large group of armed men in Ahmad Zai Village and were taken to a location in the village and questioned as to whom they worked for. The INGO was apparently well known and well respected in the community, and after members of the community were made aware of their abduction, the villagers subsequently negotiated their release. The area of Dahan-e Ghor is known to host some AOG supporters, and further evidence suggests that the AOGs in this area may be becoming more active. A fuel tanker that was hijacked in Cheshmashir Area in the early morning hours on the main Mazar-Pul-e Khumri road

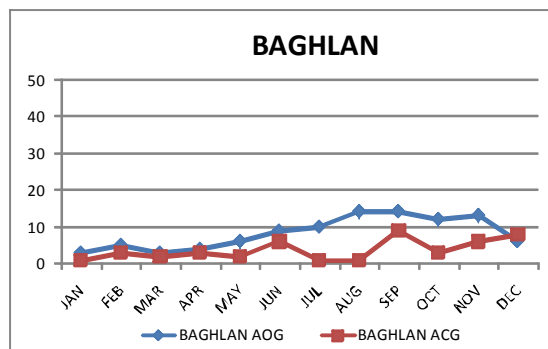
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- Heavy fighting

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	1

was apparently rerouted southwards towards Dahan-e Ghor. Also in Cheshmashir Area of Pul-e Khumri, the GOA senator from Nahrin District was gunned down by ANP while en route westward on the main road. The ambush of the vehicle was allegedly accidental; however, allegations of the senator's support for AOGs active elsewhere in the district may have also been a factor in the incident.

In Baghlani Jadid District, the risk of collateral involvement for non-combatants has increased as ANSF-AOG confrontation has intensified. Two large-scale clashes were reported this period. The first occurred in Puli Kok Chenar Area, resulting in at least 4 civilian and 5 ANSF deaths and an unknown number of additional casualties. The second occurred in Baghlani Old City, when ANSF responded to an AOG attack on



the ANP HQ by calling in an IMF airstrike targeting the house of AOG supporter, killing the individual and five members of his family. Several other ANSF and AOG casualties were reported in this clash. Elsewhere in the district, AOGs continued to attack ANP checkpoints with SAF and RPGs, while ANA continued to fire heavy artillery toward AOG positions – an ANSF tactic that was introduced to the district in October of this year. Along the main Kunduz-Pul-e Khumri highway, AOGs also reportedly hijacked the vehicle of a private construction company and abducted its occupant, highlighting the continued threat of abduction on the road.

SAR-E PUL

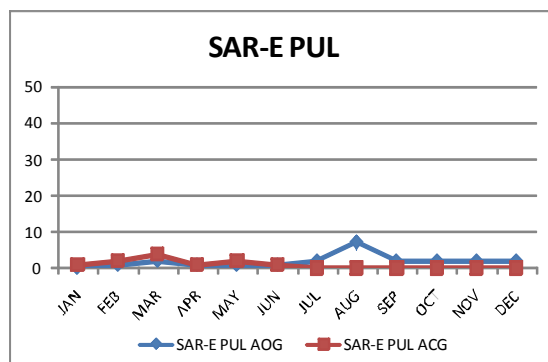
Two AOG-initiated incidents were reported in Sar-e Pul Province this period. An ANP checkpoint came under SAF and RPG attack. The checkpoint was newly established in the Jurghan Area, a valley area in the northern-most point of Kohistanat District, allowing access from Sayyad and Bilchiragh districts to a road running northward into Sari Pul district. The valley was reportedly

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

used by AOGs to infiltrate Sari Pul District during the NGO abduction reported in Adrang Area in October, and the checkpoint had been newly established to prevent further AOG movement along that route. Also, in Sayyad District, two anti-tank mines were discovered and safely removed from the main road leading the district centre. According to ANSO data, IEDs and mines in Sar-e Pul Province are extremely rare.



KUNDUZ

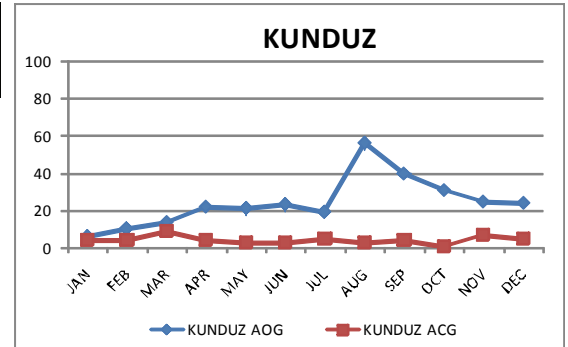
A rare NGO abduction occurred in Kunduz District, north of Kunduz City this period. Three INGO staff members were abducted from their building by two to three armed men, and taken in one of the INGO's vehicles to an unknown location. The staff members were then questioned by the kidnappers as to why they were operating without the permission of the AOG allegedly in control of the area. They were also chastised for employing female staff and serving female beneficiaries who travel to their location without mehram – accompaniment by a male relative. The INGO staff members were released after approximately 24 hours, and their vehicle remained in the custody of the kidnappers. Abductions in Kunduz Province have been very rare compared to other AOG-dominated provinces in the country, simply because AOGs lack the resources and level of community acceptance necessary to conceal and transport abductees discreetly. AOG activity directed at NGOs in Kunduz has virtually ground to a halt since this summer, when AOGs expanded and solidified their influence over

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	12
This Report Period	1

much of the province. This is due to the fact that the NGOs continuing to operate in Kunduz have shown to provide essential services with a high degree of community acceptance, warding off attacks from AOGs who are wary of risking their own.

In Khanabad District, AOGs attacked a passing ANA convoy on the Taloqan-Khanabad highway, underscoring the continued threat of collateral involvement on this highway, despite the drop-off in IED incidents on the road in the past month. IED incidents along the main road between Kunduz and Pul-e Khumri continued this period, with one IED which prematurely detonated in Aliabad District.

North of Kunduz, two IO food-supply trucks were hijacked and driven to Talawka Area, where AOGs distributed their contents among the population. ANSF intervened, sparking an armed clash. ANA went on the offensive in other areas north of the city, firing mortar rounds towards AOG positions in Talawka Area and attacking AOG locations in Pacha Qalander Area with artillery and SAF. In Gortepa Area, an armed clash between AOGs and pro-government militias resulted in the deaths of four AOGs and one civilian.



AOG clashes with pro-government militias continued apace in Imam Sahib District, specifically in Tash Guzar, Kalbad, and Quturblaq areas, resulting in the deaths of at least 11 AOGs and two pro-government militias. Reportedly, AOGs succeeded in pushing back pro-government militias in Quturblaq Area, where an armed clash was reported last period. Tension between pro-government militias and AOGs was also seen in Kunduz City, where an IED detonated in front of a pro-government militia member's private residence, injuring three of his bodyguards.

AOGs attempted to counterbalance a joint ANSF/IMF search operation in southern Chahar Dara District by launching simultaneous attacks on two ANP checkpoints north of the district centre at the time of the operation.

In Archi District, AOGs continued their offensive against government targets in Qarlogh Area, this time launching two BM-1 rockets toward an ANP location. In the first ANSF operation in the district in almost two months, a joint search operation launched by ANP and pro-government militias targeted AOG locations in Kala Tarash Area of the district, killing six and injuring seven AOGs. ANSF offensives may be expected to continue to target this area.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Threat of abduction
- Main roads unsafe
- AOG-ANSF clashes

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TAKHAR

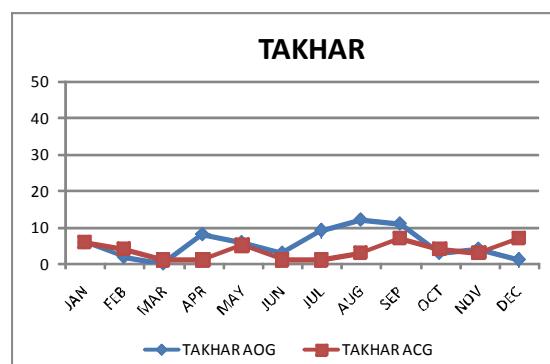
Reports of AOG presence in northern Takhar surfaced this period, particularly in Darqad, Yangi Qala, Khwaja Bahudin and Rustaq Districts. Several AOGs are known to operate in these areas, some with long-standing local presence; however, an influx of armed men in the three former districts has also been reported by the local community and other sources. In Darqad District in particular, AOG members attacked an ANP checkpoint in Pahlawan Bira Area, and unknown armed individuals stopped civilian vehicles in Qaghni Area

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ➔ AOG presence in northern Takhar

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

and robbed them of their cash and valuables. In Rustaq District, two civilians were kidnapped for ransom and a former ANP officer's residence came under attack. Also in Baharak District, roadside robberies were reported in Qara Hundo Area, north of the main Taloqan-Khanabad road. NGOs and local community members have responded to the increased threat level in northern Takhar by convening security meetings to discuss the problem. It is not apparent that the AOG presence poses a direct threat to NGOs; however, some NGOs have restricted movements to certain areas and are lowering their profile in others. An increase in AOG presence may not necessarily



translate into an immediate increase in notable AOG-initiated incidents; however, if these AOGs continue to target ANSF, additional ANSF operations and clashes in these northern districts may be expected.

Elsewhere in Taloqan and Ishkamish districts, one significant seizure and one arrest were made by ANP. In Taloqan, a large amount of explosives was uncovered with a weapons cache including remote control devices, and in Ishkamish, an AOG member known for planting IEDs in the district was arrested.

FARYAB

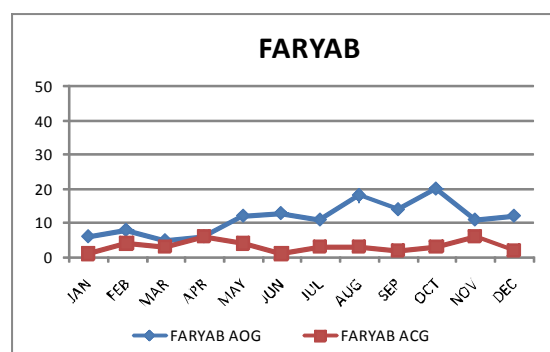
AOG activity in Faryab Province comes from two sources, one from the southwest, originating in Badghis Province, and one from the east, indigenous to the area where Bilchiragh, Sayyad, Darzab and Qush Tepa districts meet along the border of the Jawzjan, Sari Pul and Faryab provinces. AOG activity in the province remains predictable, with no change in the target profile which remains IMF and ANSF forces, with occasional criminal attacks on civilians. In the southwest of the province, a strategic attack on an ANBP checkpoint yielded a significant

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ➔ Attacks against ANSF

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

loss for ANSF. First, AOGs attacked a particular checkpoint twice. The following day, when ANSF/IMF reinforcements were sent in to protect the checkpoint, the AOGs laid an ambush, killing two ANSF and seizing two ANSF vehicles and a large amount of equipment. Two other attacks on ANP checkpoints were reported in Almar district, and two were reported in Qaysar district. In the east, AOGs also attacked an ANP checkpoint in Bilchiragh district. In Shirin Tagab District, in the first AOG-initiated incident recorded since October, an AOG shot and injured a truck driver working for an international road construction company. In the



past, in addition to IMF/ANSF targetting, AOGs would occasionally target road construction companies building both the Mayman-Andkhoy road and the Maymana-Qalai Naw road. Local civilians were also targeted this period in Dawlatabad District, with two attacks on civilian residences, and in Pashtun Kot, Khwaja Na Musa Subdistrict, the corpse of a local civilian was found hung from a tree, believed to be executed by an AOG.

HERAT

On December 21st a national staff member employed in an INGO was abducted in Kushki Kuhna District Centre area. The victim negotiated with his captors and was released the following day. However his car as well as his personal belongings have not yet been recovered. It is notable that no prior threats or warnings preceded these incidents and the NGO in question had had guarantee from the main local AOG. It seems that the perpetrators were not members of a local AOG but rather a group operating from other areas. Moreover, this abduction appears more as an opportunistic attempt than a planned action targeting an NGO. How-

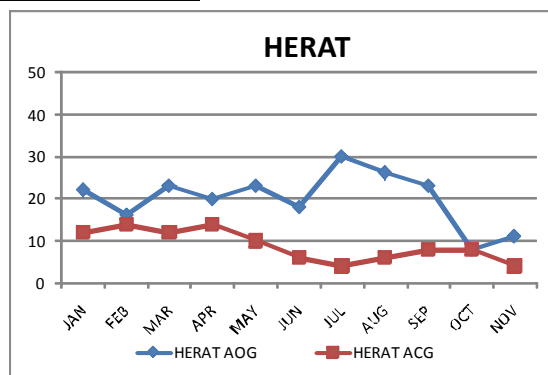
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG activity in Kushk and Kushke Kuhna
- IED/RCIED
- Rocket attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	19
This Report Period	1

ever, taking into account that AOG activity in the district has been increasing in recent months and with it the possibility of further incidents, NGOs operating in this area should re-evaluate guarantees of safe passage with AOGs and to lead an appropriate risk assessment. Based on past evidence, an increase in AOG activities often leads to an increase in ANSF presence and/or operations. In the same district but in Darzak area, following an AOG ambush on an ANSF/IMF convoy on December 30th, security forces led an operation supported by airstrikes that ended the following day, killing 12 AOG members including one prominent AOG commander.

AOG activity targeting ANSF/IMF and GoA officials continues in Herat Province. In Adrasan District, an RCIED placed in a motorbike on the Herat-Kandahar



main road hit a military convoy. In Kushk District, on December 15th, an RCIED killed five ANP including the District Chief of Police. Another feature of the past reporting period is the significant number of explosives seizures throughout the province. For instance, in Shindand District security forces seized an assortment of weapons and munition including 400 mortar bombs, and an IED was recovered in Herat City, District 9. In Herat City, the security situation remains relatively calm and the observance of the religious holidays of Ashura passed without incident. Of note, another 'escalation of force' incident occurred on December 22nd, on the Herat-Airport road. IMF opened fire on two civilian motorbikes approaching too close to an IMF convoy, wounding both seriously.

GHOR

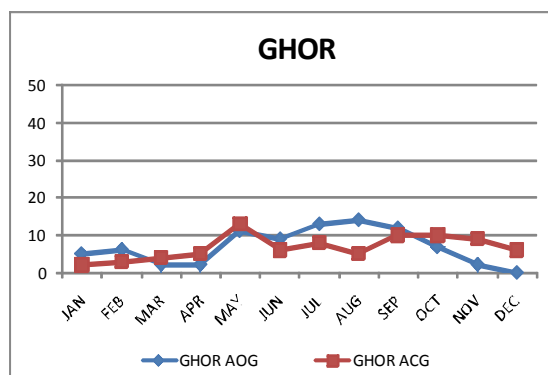
Ghor remains relatively quiet with no NGO related incidents since late November due mainly to reduced NGO exposure during the winter. Similar to the previous reporting period, most incidents are related to criminal activity. For instance, in Chagcharan, on De-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Local Conflicts
- Criminal Activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

cember 25th an armed clash occurred between an ACG and villagers over NSP-related assets, resulting in two persons killed and three injured. Reporting indicates that an amount of cash was also stolen by ACG. In Saghara District, ANP confronted a group of smugglers with SAF, wounding two of them and seizing a small quantity of drugs. Of note also,



two women were killed in two separate incidents, in Charsada and Taywara Districts in family disputes.

DID YOU KNOW THAT ANSO CONDUCTS SITE SECURITY REVIEWS?

Contact your Regional Safety Advisor for details (P.16)

FARAH

Sporadic AOG activity targeting mainly ANSF/IMF and GoA facilities continues in Farah. During this reporting period Bakwa District witnessed an AOG attack on an ANP check post. Besides the collateral exposure to AOG attacks, road security remains another concern for NGOs in the

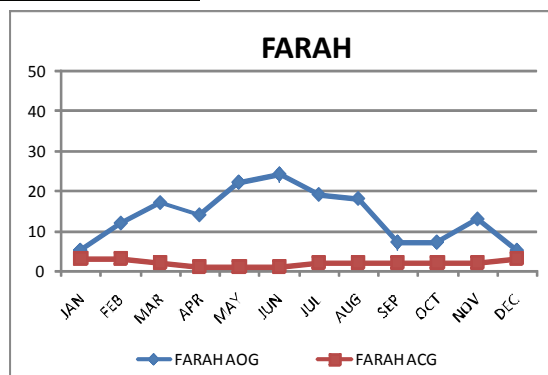
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED/RCIEDs
- AOG-ANSF/IMF clashes
- Military operation

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

province mainly due to use of IED/RCIEDs. For instance, on the main road in Gulistan, two AOG were killed when an RCIED they were planting exploded. In Pusht Rod District, also on the main road, ANP recovered and defused another RCIED.

Reporting indicates a concentration of AOG elements especially in Bala-Buluk and Pusht Rod Districts. NGOs should take into



account the likelihood of military and/or police operations in these areas.

Another important risk factor in the province is abduction. In Farah District, a group of armed men abducted a local civilian travelling on public transport on 22nd December.

BADGHIS

As seen in the past reporting period, AOG activity continues to manifest itself mainly in Murghab District with AOG direct attacks on ANP post and ambushes on ANSF/IMF patrols still commonplace in the area. Of note, on the 28th of December, AOG attacked a joint ANSF/IMF position lo-

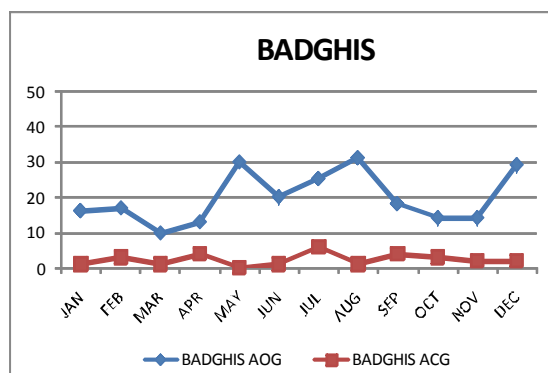
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG ambushes
- Armed clashes
- Collateral damage

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

cated in the DAC with SAF and mortars. Subsequently, IMF conducted an airstrike in the area causing an unknown number of civilian casualties. Besides direct attacks, AOG fired one rocket towards the Ghormach DAC on 17th December.

The continuing deterioration in security in Qadis District is also worth noting. On 26th December AOG attacked Langar, taking temporally control of the area for a few days (setting ablaze, the fol-



lowing day, a health clinic and a female school). Finally, on the 28th ANSF re-captured the area in a military operation.

LAGHMAN

The second half of December has been a relatively quiet in Laghman Province. Compared to the previous reporting cycle, the number of AOG-initiated security incidents decreased by 50% (to three), namely one direct attack and two

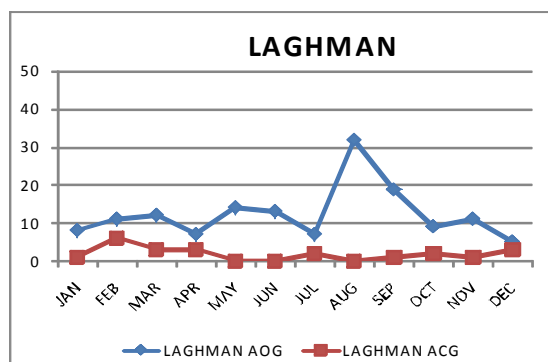
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from clashes
- IEDs in Alingar and Alishing Valleys

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

IED-incidents. Meanwhile the level of IMF/ANSF operations, especially in Qarghayi district, has remained constant.

A direct attack occurred on 16 December in Dawlat Shah District, where an AOG attacked an ANA patrol without causing damage. As reported in previous periods, the relatively limited use of IEDs in Laghman remains limited to the Alishing and Alingar val-



leys. Although IEDs are not particularly common, it still should be viewed as a concern by those using routes north of Mihtarlam.

NANGARHAR

During the evening hours of 15 December, in Sherzad District, an unknown group of people approached an INGO project facility under construction. The group placed explosives around the project facility and partially damaged it. According to ANSO data, this has been the first assault on such a project facility in Nangarhar Province in 2009. This background, and the fact that no AOG took responsibility for the attack, suggests a local dispute rather than a specifically targeted assault against the INGO behind the attack.

Compared to the last reporting period, Nangarhar has witnessed a 50% increase in security incidents in late December, from 34 to 51 reported incidents. In line with historic trends, the majority of them are linked to either criminal

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

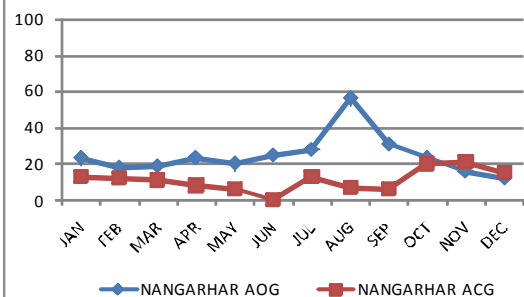
- Criminal activity
- IEDs
- Abduction/Kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	1

activity or security forces operations. For example, in an incident pertaining civilians on 31 December in Rodat district, a criminal group abducted a foreign engineer who was working for a private telephone company. Later that day, ANP conducted an operation and freed him from an unspecified location in Chaparhar district.

The high number of demonstrations across Nangarhar seen during the last reporting period decreased, with only one major protest this time. On 30 December in Jalalabad City, around 300 students staged a demonstration to protest against the alleged killing of civilians by security forces during IMF-led operations in Kunar Province on 27/12/09. The protesters chanted anti-America and anti-Afghan-Government slogans and the burned an effigy of the US President. The crowd dispersed peacefully after they blocked the Jalalabad-Kabul Road for three hours.

NANGARHAR



Only two direct attacks, namely one in Chaparhar against a private residence and one in Goshta district against an ANBP CP, and one rocket attack targeting JAF were recorded in this period.

But, after the substantial decrease of IED deployment in Nangarhar seen in early December, the province has seen resurgence in emplaced explosive devices during this reporting period. In total, 16 devices were detonated or located in Nangarhar with six in Chaparhar, three in Khogyani, two in Dih Bala, two in Bihsud, one in Rodat, one in Kama and one in Pachir-wa-Agam districts. Such a high level of IEDs in late December represents a new high for this type activity. A significant amount of devices (well over 30 %) were emplaced in Chaparhar district which poses further challenges to road travel in this area. ANSO ER recommends that NGOs should avoid road travel throughout in Chaparhar to the greatest extent possible.

PAKTYA

On 21 December in Gardez City, three AOG armed with body-borne suicide vests, AK-47s, and RPGs attacked the provincial ANP HQ of Paktya. During the clash and while reinforcements arrived, the AOG managed to seize a commercial building in Gardez's Muhmand Market area. The firefight lasted for about two

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Complex attacks in Gardez City
- IEDs

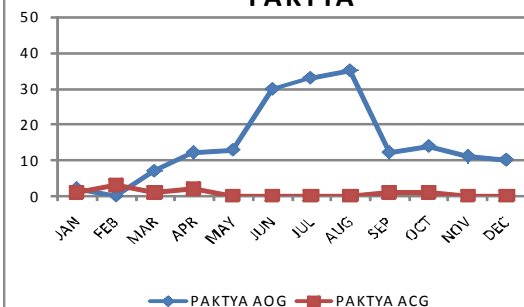
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

hours, resulting in both ANSF and civilian casualties.

The aforementioned incident was the second complex and well-coordinated attack of AOG in Gardez City in a few days. Just prior, an IED explosion caused significant damage inside the compound of a for-profit development agency. These incidents underline the capability of AOG to conduct complex attacks in Paktya.

Besides this high-profile assault, Paktya Province witnessed a sig-

PAKTYA



nificant decrease of security incidents. Other than a direct attack against the District Administration Centre of Jani Khel district on 29 December, no AOG-initiated incidents were recorded during this reporting period.

KUNAR

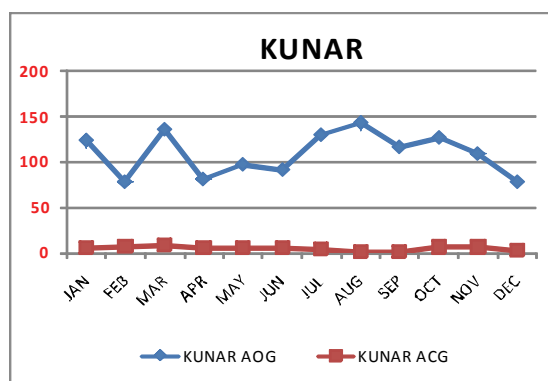
With 65 security incidents recorded during this reporting period (almost the same level reported in late December 2008), Kunar continues to account for a significant portion of AOG activity in the Eastern Region. The eleven incidents not attributed to AOG include the murder of a male and a female for having “illegal and immoral” relations, two personal disputes, several IMF/ANSF operations and three demonstrations. The motivation behind the latter was to voice discontent about the alleged killing of civilians by security forces during an IMF led operation in Kunar Province on 27 December. Although all demonstrations

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Indirect fire in Sirkanay district
- Collateral damage from clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

ended peacefully after causing significant traffic congestion, the amount of protests as well as the number of demonstrators is unusually high and worth monitoring closely in the coming days. The majority of the 54 AOG-initiated incidents reported in Kunar are rather typical for the province. Well over 60 % of them (33 incidents) were direct-fire attacks against security forces, convoys and facilities associated with official entities. But, compared to previous reporting cycles, the intensity and frequency of current direct attacks suggests a higher availability of manpower and munitions to AOGs in Kunar. For instance, on 22 December, around 100 AOG members attacked the Chapa Dara district administrative centre for two hours.



The level of recorded IED incidents remains at a relatively low level compared to other provinces with four incidents reported in Narang, Marawara and Sirkanay districts. During this reporting period, all devices were discovered before detonation.

As witnessed during the last winter season, this reporting period has seen a resurgence of indirect fire attacks in Kunar with twelve uses of mortar and rocket fire in Bar Kunar, Wata Pur, Manogai, Ghaziabad, Asadabad and Sirkanay districts. 50 % of indirect-fire assaults in Kunar occurred in Sirkanay district, a significant increase compared to previous reporting

NURISTAN

On 20 December, in Waygal District, an INGO national staff member was abducted along with an unaffiliated person by a criminal group as they were travelling through the area in a private taxi. The victims were brought to an unknown location and the unaffiliated person was released after a few hours of detention. Through

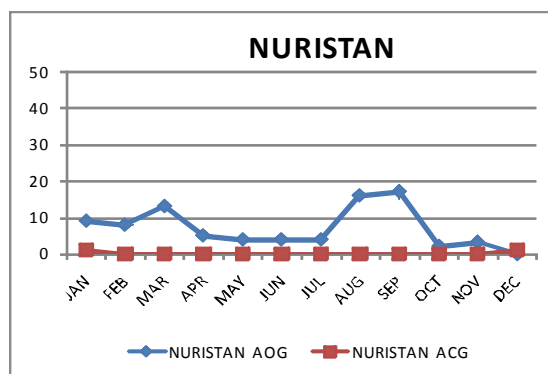
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG prevalence
- Abduction/Kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	1

the mediation of local elders, the abducted INGO national staff member was released three days later without sustaining any injuries.

Although no further incidents were recorded during this reporting cycle, this incident underlines once more that Nuristan Province as a whole remains an extremely volatile and isolated environment for NGO travel or operations. ANSO ER strongly recommends extreme caution throughout



Nuristan. Because of the lack of information, ANSO would greatly appreciate any information, however trivial, regarding any known incidents, threats, or possible rumours from this province.

INTERESTED IN GUARD AND RADIO OPERATOR TRAINING FOR YOUR STAFF?

Contact operations2@afgnsso.org for more details

(available for national staff only)

KANDAHAR

A rare incident in Spin Boldak incident highlights the still-present threat of abduction in the province. All that is currently known is that unknown armed individuals stopped an INGO vehicle and took captive one occupant while releasing the other two. ANSO will continue to update this situation as more is understood about its circumstances. De-mining organisations continue to face a large amount of scrutiny from AOGs and continue to be threatened (see Helmand for more on this). In Daman District, night letters were widely distributed threatening locals who work with de-mining organisations with execution. The continuing emphasis on de-mining is a widespread phe-

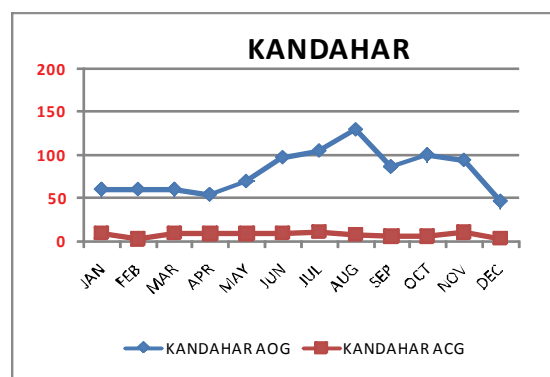
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	1

nomenon apparent in other areas of the country. Given the rather non-offensive nature of the work, possible reasons for AOG belligerence towards de-miners could entail profile (being perceived as military) and deterrence practices (de-miners often use armed guards or even ANP for protection). An IED attack which killed four Canadian soldiers and a journalist also generated significant media reporting.

In Kandahar city major concerns for NGO workers is random violence and crime, along with proximity to likely AOG targets such as ANSF. A large explosion near the Continental Hotel in District 2 was the result of the premature detonation of a device concealed in the back of a horse-cart whose intended target still remains unknown. In other instances an individual was hit and wounded by stray gunfire and a few others

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- IEDs
- AOG-IMF/ANSF Clashes



were attacked or targeted in apparent cases of ACG activity or racketeering. Abduction still remains a concern in Kandahar City even though no recent cases affecting the NGO community have been reported.

IMF operations in Shah Wali Kot have incurred civilian casualties. In one instance an IMF helicopter strike on locals riding motorcycles who were returning from a wedding partially destroyed the mosque they sought refuge in (upon sight of the helicopter), killed three of their number, and wounded two more. Another IMF airstrike on a Toyota Siracha (a common vehicle) in Khosraw Area killed three of the vehicles occupants and also wounded a woman and her three children who were also in the vehicle.

URUZGAN

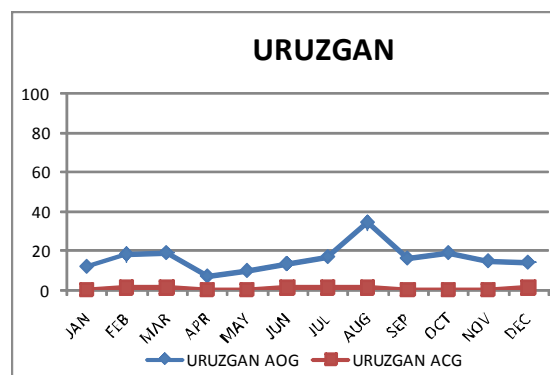
Another suicide attack in Dihrawud District of Uruzgan points to the possibility of more conflict between AOGs and local actors. In this instance a BBIED attempted to gain access to a meeting of community elders tak-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

ing place at the DAC (and hence presumably in league with GoA), but was identified by ANA who opened fire on the individual and set off his IED, killing the attacker and wounding five ANA soldiers. Clashes between AOGs and IMF/ANSF continued in Khas Uruzgan and in Tirin Kot itself. AOGs initiated three incidents, including a rocket attack on an ANP checkpoint and two IED

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- AOG-IMF/ANSF clashes



attacks on ANP and IMF respectively. In that latter case IMF identified and defused the device which had been planted in a culvert.

DID YOU KNOW THAT ANSO PROVIDES A MONTHLY ORIENTATION BRIEFING FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL STAFF?

Contact operations@afgnso.org for more details

HELMAND

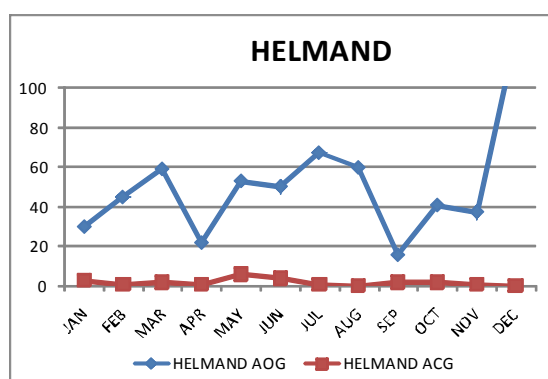
Activity in the Helmand River Valley shows little sign of abating, particularly in the districts of Nahri Sarraj, Lashkargah, Sangin, and Nad Ali. A local employee of a local de-mining NGO was kidnapped on 16 December and released on the 28th after the intervention of community elders (see Kandahar for another instance of

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Ambushes
- IEDs
- AOG Presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	1

de-miners being threatened). Most activity in Lashkargah was AOG initiated with the notable exception of an instance in which a commander was killed in a joint ANSF/IMF operation. In Nad Ali an IMF operation backed with airpower resulted in the death of twelve civilians and the wounding of six more, while rockets fired by IMF in Zarghon village landed in a residential area and killed two civilians. Elsewhere in the provinces AOGs continue to divide



their efforts between ambushes and IED attacks. AOG initiative contributed to their being responsible for 45 out of 65 reported security incidents during this reporting period.

GHAZNI

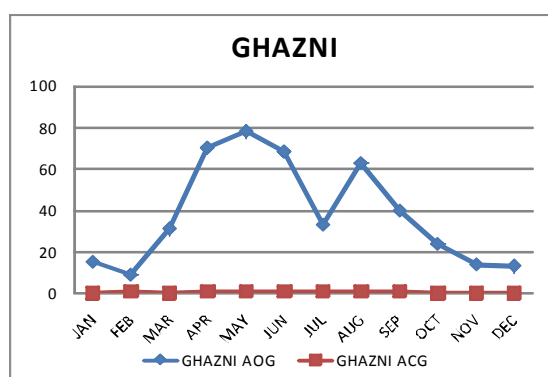
Ghazni district saw an increase in IMF/ANSF activity during this reporting period with forces launching a number of operations in an around the city. Such operations were also met with resis-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- Targeted Attacks
- Increased IMF activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

tance on a few occasions resulting in the killing of an IMF soldier and an AOG ambush on a convoy. The Rashidan district centre came under complex attack by AOGs involving heavy weaponry but ANSF managed to repel the attack and the AOG fled the area. AOG activity remains rather more diffuse throughout consisting mainly of AOG-initiated incidents



targeting IMF and ANSF with either IEDs or ambushes.

PAKTIKA

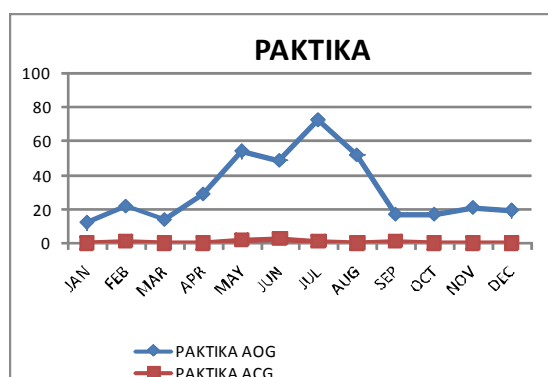
The rather extensive search operations undertaken in Yahya Khel and Yusef Khel district appear to have had the effect of decreasing AOG activity there, but at no benefit to Sharan and Urgan,

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abductions
- IEDs
- Ambush

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

which experienced a large number of security incidents, all AOG-initiated. AOG methods in both districts remain the same as those favoured throughout much of the South, a combination of ambushes and IEDs. Sharan also saw the use of one quasi-secondary device, a tactic rarely employed in Afghanistan. A local accused of working for GoA was murdered and an IED placed under-



neath him so that it detonated when ANP came to inspect, killing two.



ANSO is hosted by
Deutsche Welthungerhilfe

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contact:
operations2@afgnso.org

ANSO is managed by an NGO
Board. If you have any
feedback, good or bad, let
them know on:
ansoab@yahoo.com

ANSO ACRONYMS

ACG-Armed Criminal Group
/ **AEF**-Afghan Eradication
Forces / **ANA**-Afghan Na-
tional Army / **ANBP**-Afghan
National Border Police /
ANP-Afghan National Police
/ **AOG**-Armed Opposition
Group / **APPF**-Afghan Public
Protection Forces (local
deputised militias) / **DC**-
District Centre / **GOA**-
Government of Afghanistan
/ **IDF**-Indirect Fire (ex: mor-
tars) / **IED**-Improvised Ex-
plosive Device / **IMF**-
International Military Forces
/ **NDS**-National Directorate
of Security (Intelligence) /
PRP-Previous Reporting
Period / **PSC**-Private Secu-
rity Company / **RPG**-Rocket
Propelled Grenade / **SAF**-
Small Arms Fire / **VBIED**-
Vehicle Borne Improvised
Explosive Device

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MISSING

This report ANSO
could not provide
analysis for the prov-
inces of:

Panjshir
Samangan
Khost
Nimroz
Zabul

This is because we
do not know enough
about the area to
comment on the sig-
nificance of the inci-
dents occurring
there.

If you can help us
understand the prov-
ince better, please
contact us.

ANSO SERVICES

ANSO offers two types of services to its members: **SCHEDULED** and **REQUEST**

- **SCHEDULED** Services will be provided by ANSO, without request, at pre-specified times or under certain circumstances
- **REQUEST** Services are available on demand (if time and resources permit)
- All Services are provided free of charge to ANSO members

SCHEDULED SERVICES	REQUEST SERVICES
REPORTS: ➤ Security Reports (Daily) ➤ Threat Warnings (Daily) ➤ The ANSO Report (Bi-weekly) ➤ Quarterly NGO Security Report MEETINGS: ➤ Regional Security Meetings (Weekly) ➤ Country Briefing (Bi-weekly) ➤ Directors Meeting (Monthly) ➤ Staff Orientation Service (Monthly) TRAINING: ➤ Guard and Comms. Training (Weekly)	➤ Security Advice Service (Daily, within office hours) ➤ Single-Agency Crisis Response Service (as required) ➤ Multi-Agency Crisis Response Service (as required) ➤ Site Security Review Service (as required)

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REGIONAL SAFETY ADVISOR FOR
MORE DETAILS