

ANSO QUARTERLY DATA REPORT Q.1 2010

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SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

This early in the year the tactical level data is not as important to follow as are the changes in the strategic environment which will make 2010 substantively different from the last eight years.

Our best assessment is that the International Military Forces are indeed serious about implementing an exit strategy and that NGO's should anticipate a post-ISAF environment, likely by the end of 2011.

We note that IMF have made their withdrawal contingent on being able to demonstrate two key metrics, or conditions, being a degraded armed opposition and an improved Government security force.

We assess, perhaps cynically, that there is an awareness that neither of these conditions can be genuinely extant by that time and so strategies to create the perception of them are being pursued instead.

For the first metric the plan appears to involve direct intervention of IMF, and presumably ANSF, in just 80 of the 398 districts with the remaining territory braced against AOG influence by an awkwardly stitched alliance of Government forces, tribal leaders and loosely endorsed 'militias'.

A parallel effort will be made to address the assumed root causes of conflict, via the Peace and Reintegration program, although this stands a chance of backfiring and instead empowering opposition forces by enabling the allocation of their members to the local security apparatus.

For the second metric the simple plan is to outfit Government troops at a 'minimally combat essential' level and transfer lead security responsibility as soon as possible. A low starting point, unrealistic force generation targets and problems in hiring a contractor to deliver the training makes even this limited objective unlikely.

While still a little early to assess what comes next we are concerned that the intense devolution of authority occurring during this period could seed new rounds of factional conflict after the withdrawal. At the more immediate level we are concerned about the introduction of new armed actors and new conflicts, collateral damage and the intensified efforts by all parties to politicize and militarize NGO activities.

On the other side, with this particular conflict drawing down we assess that AOG now see some self-interest in not attacking impartial NGOs as they are likely to attempt to instrumentalize our activities for their own purposes in the near future. Resisting this effort will become a dangerous new challenge.

In response to this changed environment we make two policy recommendations. First, we reiterate the importance of not engaging in civil-military coordination activities. Now more than ever NGO have nothing to gain and much to lose by interacting with the IMF who are only interested in leveraging advantage from your activities. Second, we recommend a policy driven engagement with all Afghan parties to the conflict where such can be concluded safely and legally. NGO must develop and apply deliberate communication strategies to ensure that all current and future powerbrokers understand the purpose, and independence, of your activities.

Nic Lee, ANSO Director, Kabul 2010



1. OVERVIEW OF PRIMARY CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

1.1 DIRECT INTERVENTION (SURGING)

The first aspect of the exit strategy is a surge of direct intervention by International Military Forces or as General McChrystal referred to it in his Commanders Initial Assessment (Aug 09, p.1-3) “a discrete *“jump” to gain the initiative*”.

The purpose of direct intervention is to use IMF advanced fighting skills and technology to degrade AOG capability, in key population areas, to a level where responsibility can be strategically consolidated in to the ANSF.

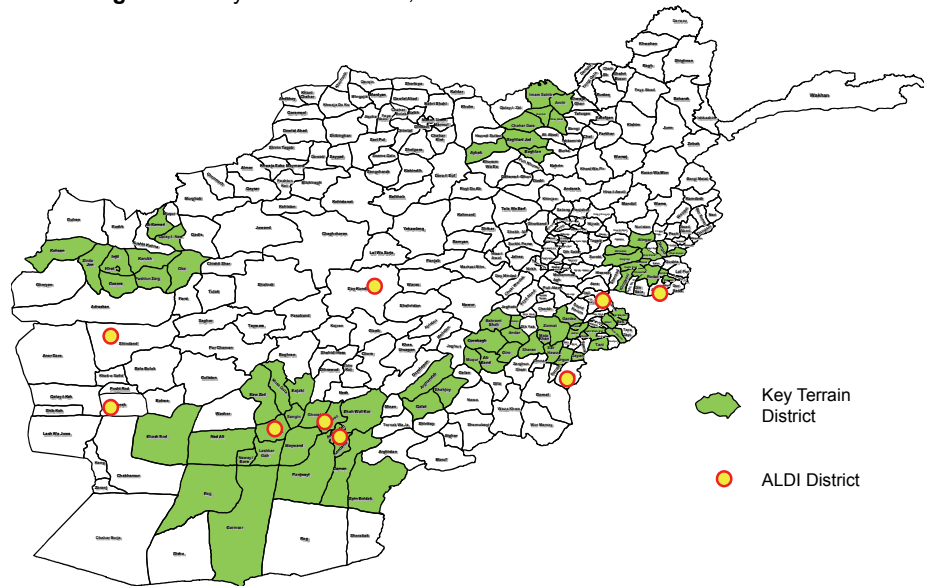
Lacking the ability to be strong everywhere IMF have identified 80 Key Terrain Districts (recreated in Fig 1 from unclassified sources) which will provide a tactical and operational focus to Regional Commanders. Although there will undoubtedly be deviation we can expect these areas to be the focus of the surge and ongoing in-country redeployments. It is notable that close to 30% of Key Terrain is in just two provinces, Kandahar & Helmand, while the entire North/North East region holds just 8 districts.

The ability of direct intervention to really degrade AOG capability is certainly disputable. The historical record would suggest that AOG tactics in the face of major operations will be to (a) slow the attacking force with stand-off resistance then (b) completely disappear from the target area before (c) stepping up the attack levels during the softer ‘hold, build’ stages of the operation. You could say they employ a ‘Hold on, Clear out and Build up’ strategy.

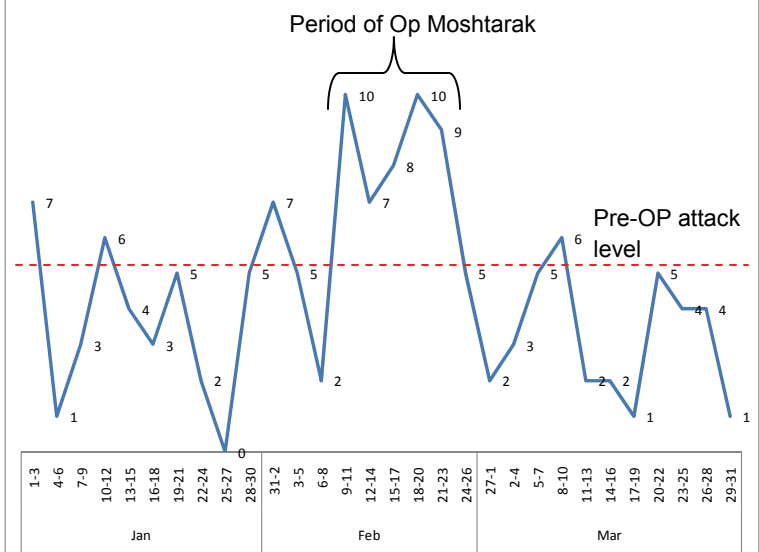
The 72 hour attack rate data from Nad Ali/ Marjah, Helmand Province, for instance (Fig 2) would indicate a small spike of resistance as OP MOSHTARAK got underway (Feb 11-23) a sharp drop off on the ‘victory’ day (Feb 25th) and a slow return to the pre-operation attack rate thereafter.

The yellow dot inserts in Figure 1 show the ALDI districts discussed on the next page but are presented here to demonstrate that they are strategically positioned to cover the gaps in IMF direct coverage.

ANSO Fig 1: IMF Key Terrain Districts, March 2010



ANSO Fig 2: AOG attacks per 72 hrs Marjah/Nad Ali, Helmand, Jan-Mar 2010

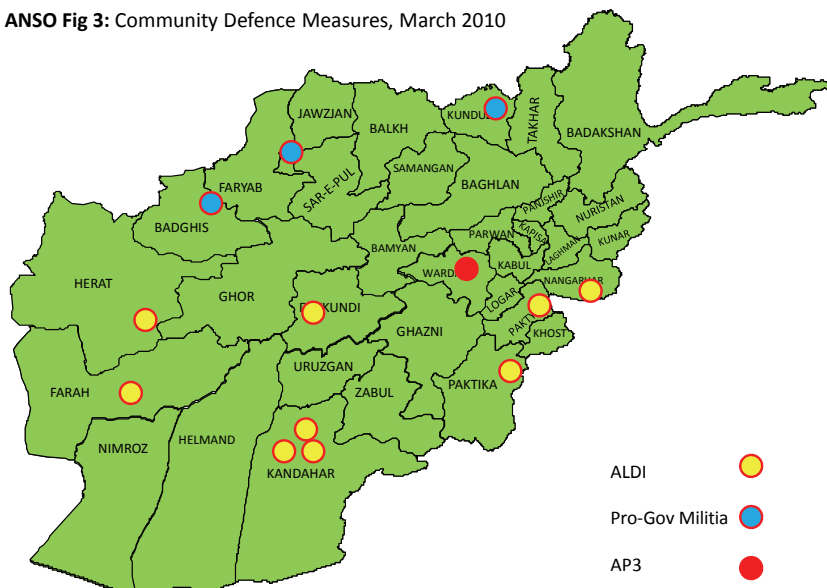


1.2 LOCAL DEFENCE INITIATIVES

The second aspect of the exit strategy is to develop resistance to AOG influence in areas that IMF cannot cover with direct intervention.

There are a number of overlapping initiatives currently operating on this theme. Chief amongst them is the Afghan Local Defence Initiative (ALDI) which as far as we know is operated directly by Special Operation Forces. It entails teams of up to 30 individuals, including development officers with access to USG funding lines, embedding with tribal communities to help organize their resistance to AOG presence. At this point we believe the program is operational in nine districts being Nili, Barmal, Achin, Arghandab, Khakrez, Shindand, Chamkani, Delaram, Ghrishk. (Fig. 3)

ANSO Fig 3: Community Defence Measures, March 2010



The first ALDI to become active, with the Shinwari tribe in Achin/Shinwar of Nangarhar province, not only devastated those areas with inter-tribal conflict but also appears to have ignited a power struggle within neighboring Khogani district as tribal leaders there vie for a similar deal. The assassination of Haji Zaman in Chamtala on 22nd February, which also caused 15 collateral fatalities, was likely the opening shot of an ongoing leadership struggle which is already causing instability across that district. The ALDI in Daykondi is reported to be offering Government security positions to tribal networks, some with deep criminal associations. NGOs have legitimate concerns that these new actors will take a less benign approach towards their work and presence.

Beyond ALDI parallel programs are providing coverage for the Northern Region focused on AOG strongholds of Imam Sahib, Archi, Khanabad and Chahadara districts of Kunduz (the only overlap with Key Terrain) with very recent reports indicating the start of a new program in Farayab to establish militias forces in Gormach, Badghis and southern areas of Jawzjan. These 'pro-government militias' are ostensibly operated by Government security departments, or Presidential appointees with significant leverage in these provinces, and are intended to extend the coverage of the ANSF but reports are already emerging of 'inter-militia' skirmishes and road robberies.

The final program of this type is the well known Afghan Public Protection Force (also called AP3) which currently operates in Jalrez, Charkh, Maidan Shah, Nirkh and Sayadabad districts of Wardak province only. NGOs report the program has been successful in bringing some stability to those areas and yet it would appear to be the only program of its type not to have the support of the IMF despite having the full backing of the MoI and being transparently integrated in to the National ANP development strategy.

1.3 PEACE & REINTEGRATION

The third main aspect will be to try and address the assumed root causes of opposition by offering incentives to mid/low level AOG fighters under the Peace & Reintegration (P&R) initiative which emerged, somewhat by surprise, from the London Conference. P&R is also expected to dominate centre court at the upcoming Kabul Conference which is why NGOs need to be aware of it. P&R is distinct from “reconciliation” in that it only targets combatants from the province level down while reconciliation refers to higher level settlements between the Government and senior AOG leaders.

It is hoped, by IMF, that by providing jobs and trainings, or by settling some specific local grievance, P&R will lure manpower away from armed opposition groups and so contribute to the metric of ‘degrading AOG capability’. The validity of this causal chain is certainly open to question. Anecdotal reports indicate that AOG have been insulted by the suggestion that they fight out of a lack of jobs and money and their spokesmen have dismissed any possibility of their participation.

Logistically it remains in the planning stages with the recent series of ‘Peace Jirgas’ held across the country intended to garner local support ahead of the Kabul Conference launch. The program is expected to be operated by a Presidentially mandated commission linked to a trust fund operated by the Ministry of Finance. Reports indicate that competition to lead the commission is fierce and that some senior Government figures are opposed. The process is currently being assisted by an IMF advisory team.

The basic stages of reintegration are (i) a combatant renouncing violence, (ii) a community agreeing to accept the return of the combatant, (iii) economic rewards for the community (iv) economic and opportunity rewards for the combatant and (v) the reintegration of the combatant in to the host community. Two models of this approach are being considered with the only difference being at stage (iv) where one model will send combatants to a centralized national training & ‘de-radicalization’ centre while the other keeps it all at a local level.

Of immediate practical concern is that the National Solidarity Program (NSP) is one of the delivery mechanism being considered. This would presumably make NSP CDCs responsible for vouching for the surrendering combatant and managing community rewards. It is not difficult to see how this would put many NGO staff at risk and ANSO recommends that NGOs prepare to challenge this suggestion at the Kabul Conference or before if possible.

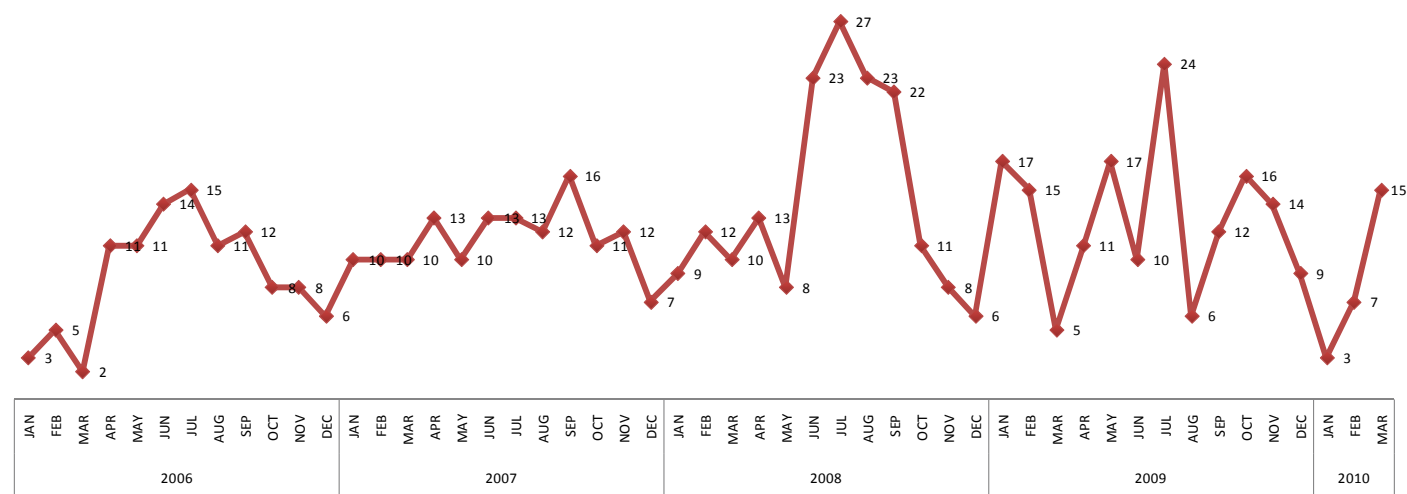
Of more strategic concern is the vagueness of the suggestions of what to do with reintegrating combatants after the process ends. Most recommendations seem centered on integrating them in to the local security apparatus be that official ANP or new community defense measures such as ALDI. The plan even considers allowing combatants to retain their light weapons for personal protection.

If this remains the intent by the time of the Kabul Conference it would seem to present a convenient mechanism for discretely *turning the opposition in to the Government*. This may indeed create local stability in the short term but may seed geographically based factionalism in the long term.

2. THE IMPACT OF CONFLICT & CRIMINALITY ON NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGO)

2.1 GENERAL NGO TRENDS

ANSO Fig 4: Total # Security Incidents directly involving NGO per month



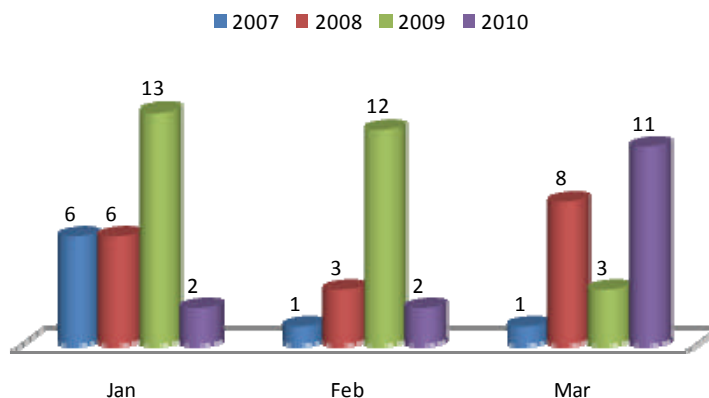
NGO have been involved in **25 incidents this quarter**, significantly down from 37 in 2009. Figure 4 indicates that incidents remain within 'normal' ranges of fluctuation over the longer period also.

A single organization incurred an additional ten (10) attacks but these are not included in the data for reasons explained in 2.2

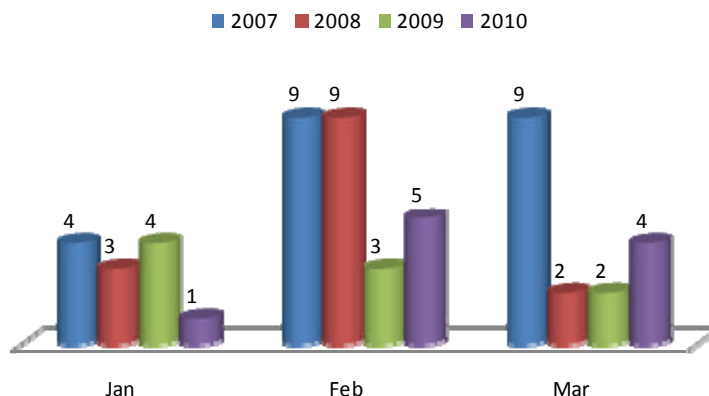
15 of the 25 incidents were attributed to AOG (Fig 5) this is down from 28 last year. The rate was especially low during Jan and February likely as a result of NGOs low profile during later winter months and AOGs preoccupation with the February Marjah campaign. Incidents escalated in March mostly as a result of a flurry of activity targeting NGO girls schools and compounds in Faryab.

Criminal incidents targeting NGO remain low with just 9 this period compared to 10 last year. No significant changes throughout the period.

ANSO Fig 5: NGO incidents caused by AOG, Jan-Mar period, 07-10



ANSO Fig 6: NGO incidents caused by ACG, Jan-Mar period, 07-10



2.2 TYPES OF NGO INCIDENTS

In comparison with 2009 the types of NGO incidents caused by AOG (Fig 7) have been mild.

Although weapons have been present at most incidents the only solidly 'kinetic' attacks have been the IEDs in Uruzgan and Parwan, which sadly both caused fatalities (2 NGO and 2 Civ), and the armed entry of a demining compound in Kandahar. Compare this with the three small arms attacks and four IED of Q1 2009.

Abductions too have become less severe with just 6 persons taken this period, compared to 20 last year, and all of them released without harm after no more than six days. The entry of school sites and NGO compounds in Faryab (x5) resulted in some theft and arson but no armed activity (except a school guard shooting at the AOG).

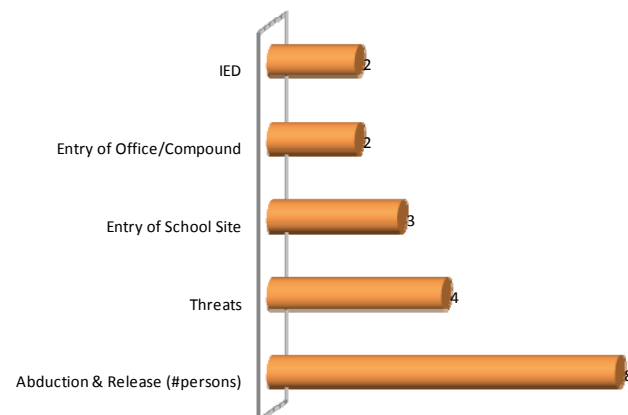
ANSO assesses that this good track record to date is at least partially due to AOG intent not to target genuinely impartial NGOs. AOG statements to this effect, the early release of NGO abductees and the 'friendly warning' given to an NGO in Takhar reinforce this assessment.

By way of contrast Figure 9 details the ten additional incidents targeting the single organization, mentioned in 2.1. It is targeted so frequently because AOG perceive it as supporting IMF by implementing high profile projects in difficult areas. As a result the majority of incidents are kinetic and severe. Comparing the two datasets provides a clear account of the relationships between posture, perception and attacks.

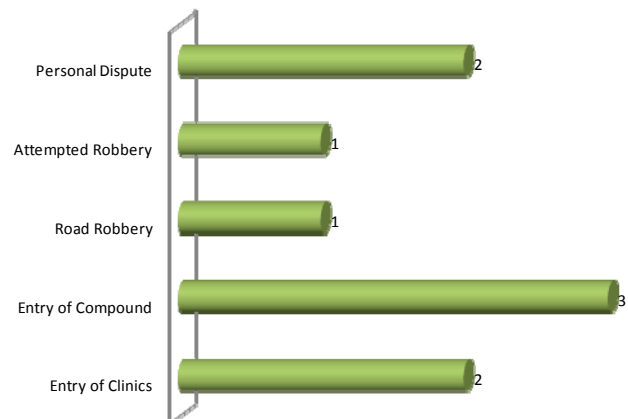
Given the unique stance of this organization we do not include these incidents in the NGO count as they are not indicative of general threat trends.

NGO have remained vulnerable to robbery on the road and at home (Fig 8) and personal disputes have involved weapons but fortunately no NGO fatalities so far.

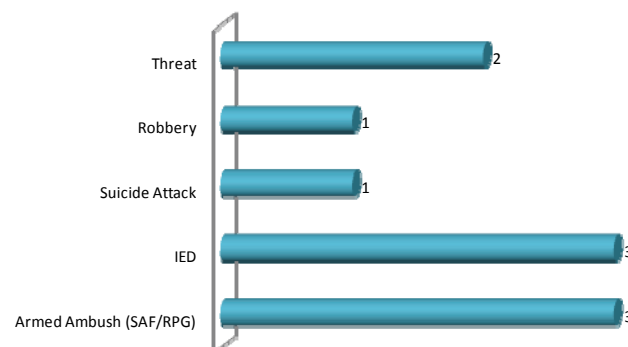
ANSO Fig 7: Types of AOG incidents against NGO, Jan-Mar 2010



ANSO Fig 8: Types of ACG incidents against NGO, Jan-Mar 2010

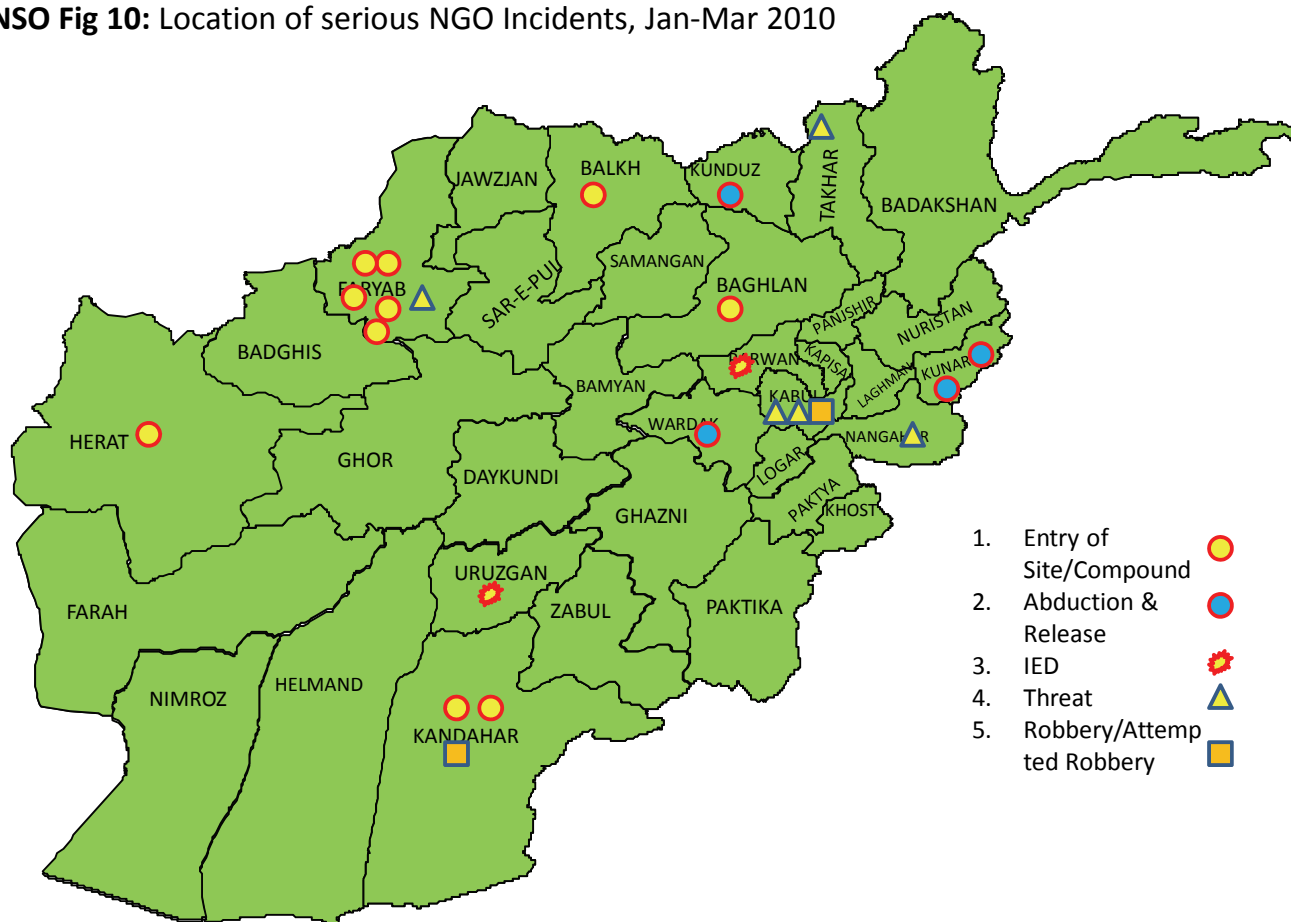


ANSO Fig 9 : Types of incidents against one organization, Jan-Mar 2010



2.3 NGO INCIDENT MAPPING

ANSO Fig 10: Location of serious NGO Incidents, Jan-Mar 2010



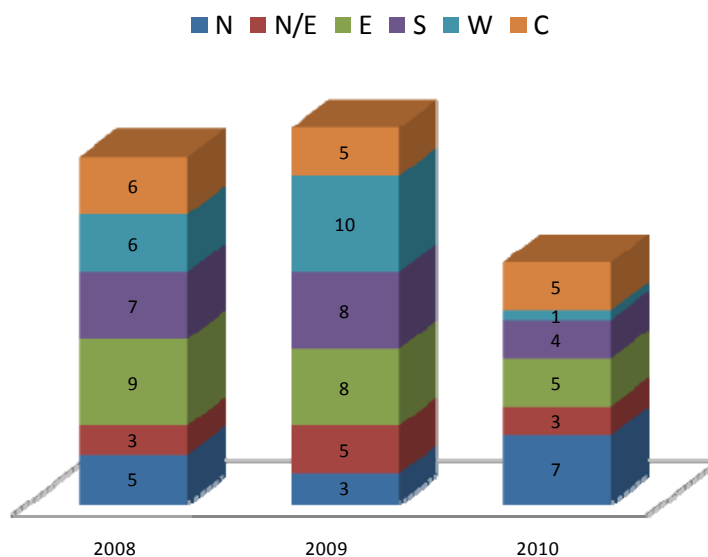
The comparison of Q1 NGO incidents per region (Fig 11) shows that the percentage occurring in the North has grown from 8% in 09 to 28% of total this year. This caused mostly by the flurry of incidents in Faryab 2-12 March.

Also notable is the sharp drop in the Western region (from 10-1) although additional serious incidents occurred just outside the quarter period.

That the North and Northeast regions account for 40% of the total is also reflective of the density of NGO presence in those areas.

Location of NGO incidents has no obvious correlation to conflict areas.

ANSO Fig 11: Direct NGO incidents per region, Jan-Mar, 08-10

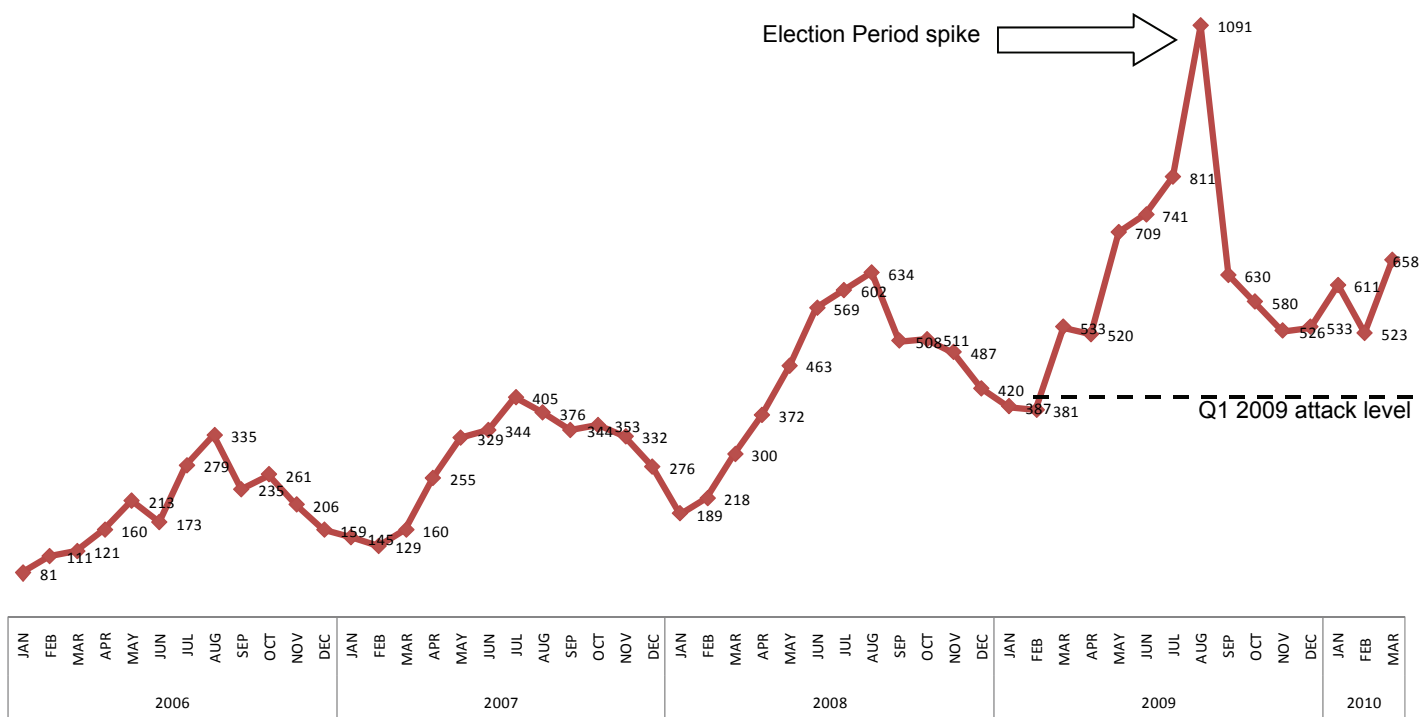


3. CONFLICT TRENDS & ANALYSIS

3.1 AOG INITIATED ATTACKS

ANSO Fig 12: Monthly AOG initiated attacks, 06-10

(NOTE: Includes only close range, indirect fire and suicide attacks, Does NOT include any criminal activity or events)

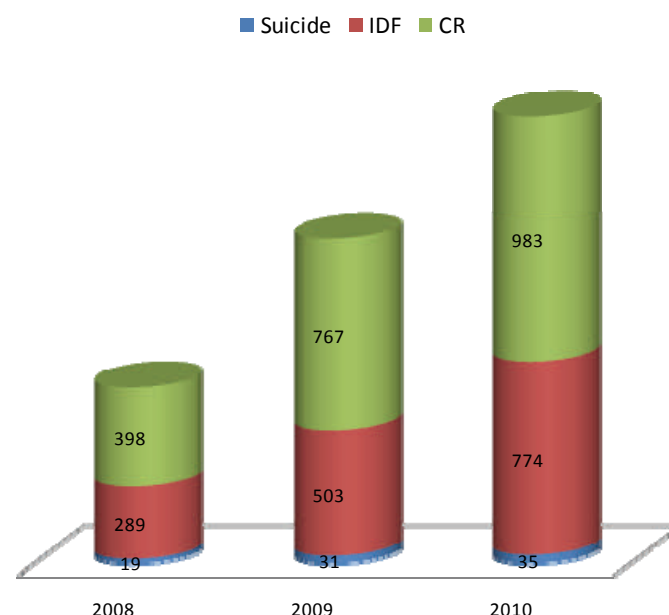


Data indicates that AOG initiated attacks have **grown by more than 35% on Q1 of 2009**. If the exit strategy is to gain traction IMF will be looking for a measurable downturn in this key metric.

Disaggregated data (Fig 9) indicates that the rate of suicide bombings has remained stable while the main growth has been within the close ranges and stand-off attack types. Use of IEDs especially has escalated.

NOTE: Where these key statistics differ from other reporting entities (specifically UNDSS) that is due to the use of different categorization systems.

ANSO Fig 13: Tactical composition of AOG attacks, Jan-Mar, 08-10



3.2 CONFLICT AREA

ANSO Fig 14: AOG attacks per province, Jan-Mar 2010

(This is NOT a threat map colors represent incident rates NOT level of accessibility)

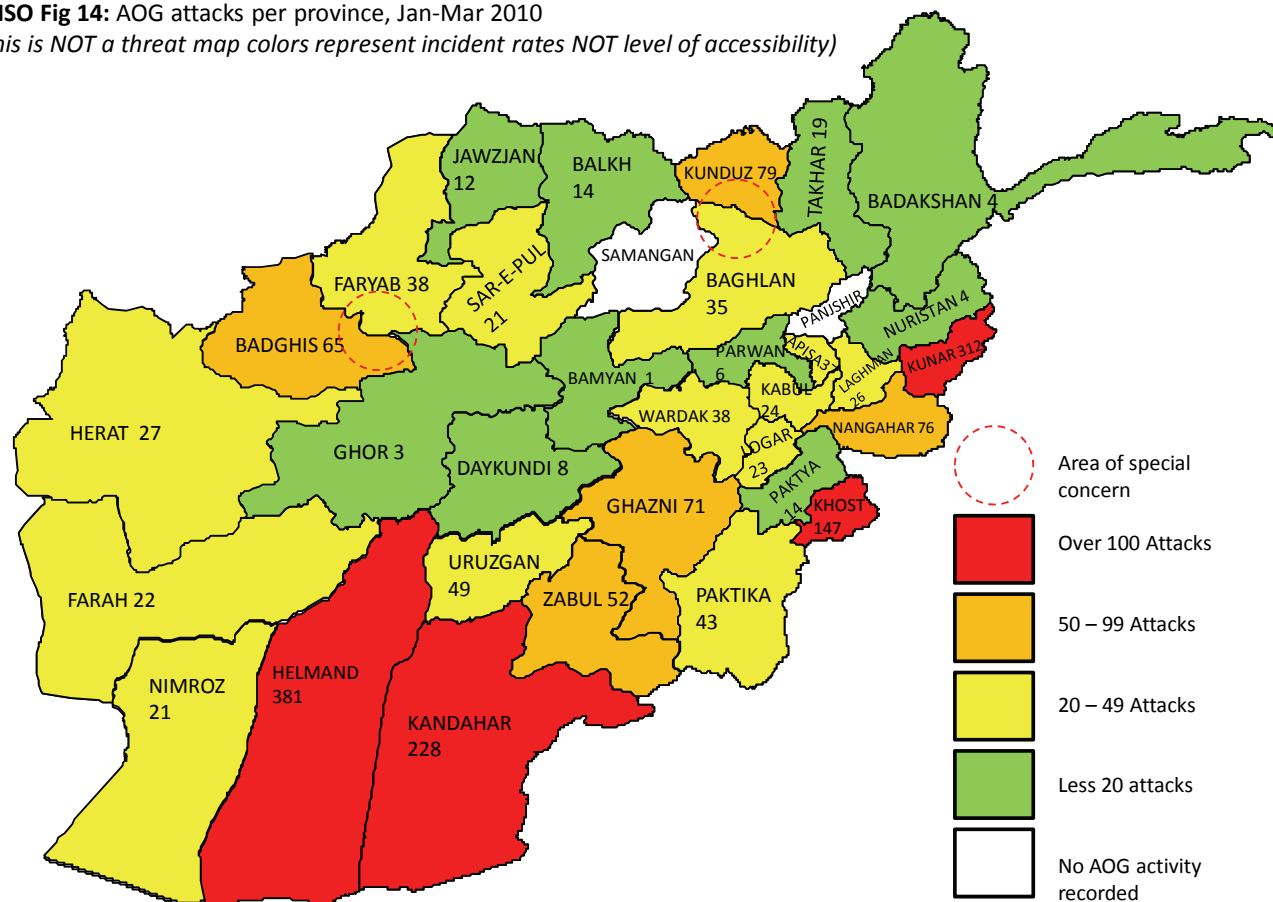
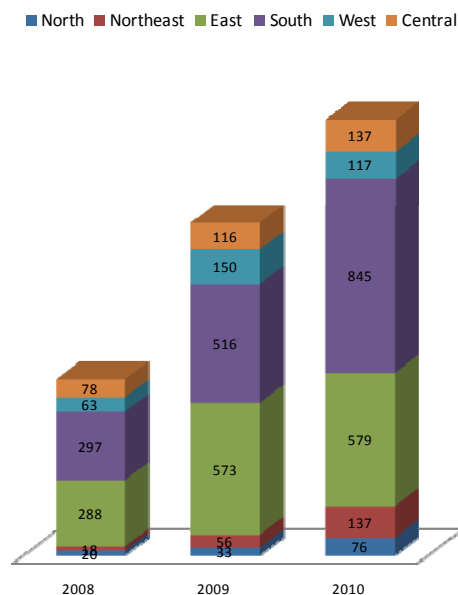


Figure 14 maps AOG kinetic events only such as small arms fire, RPG's, IED's, mortar and missile strikes. It does not map any criminal activity. The data confirms a heavy concentration of attacks in four provinces, a notable presence in five others and some capability in thirteen more for a total **22 provinces within which AOG are conducting operations** at this time (58% of country).

The surprises here are Baghlan/Kunduz, the main road between which has been the scene of intense conflict over the last 1.5 months, and Badghis/Faryab with the AOG in Bilchiagh, Pashtun Kot, Qaramqol, Gormach and Jawand having some successes in frustrating the elevated security presence. Ongoing, and upcoming, community defense initiatives in these areas may alter the dynamics in either direction.

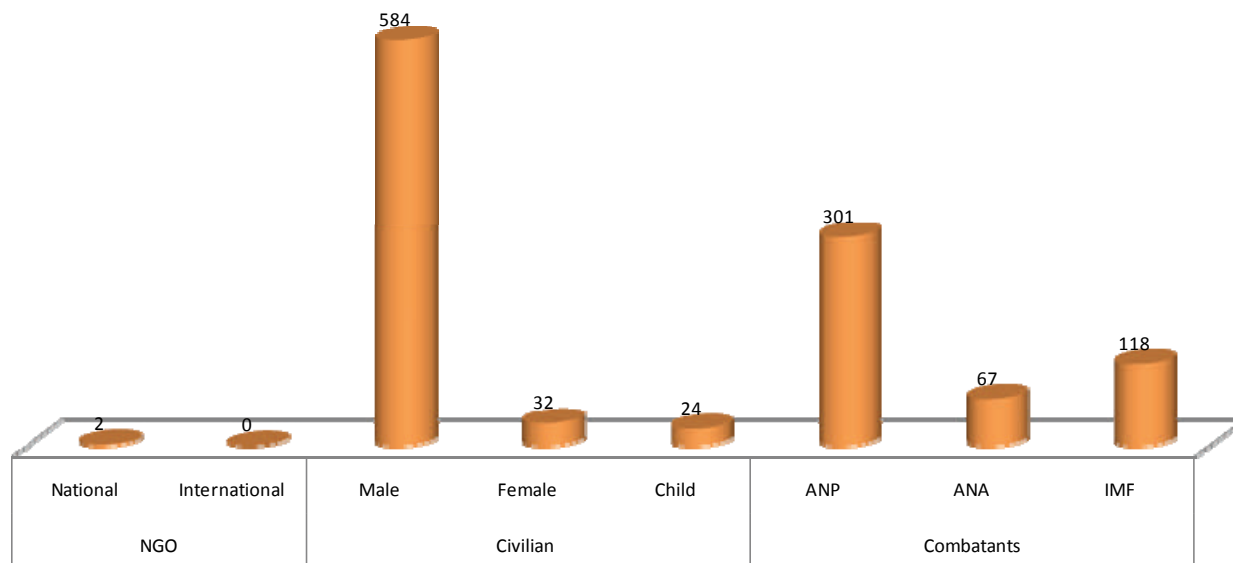
Regional disaggregation (Fig 15) shows **the percentage of all attacks occurring in the N/NE has jumped from 5% in 08 to 11% this year** with both North and Northeast doubling their actual counts.

ANSO Fig 15: AOG attacks occurring per region Jan-Mar, 08-10



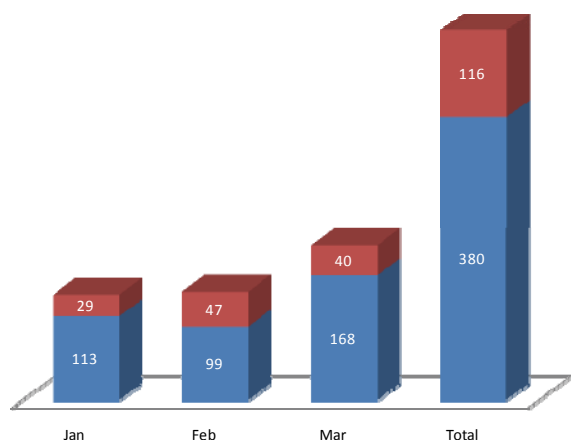
3.3 FATALITIES

ANSO Fig 16: Gross fatalities, all causes, per sector, Jan-Mar 2010

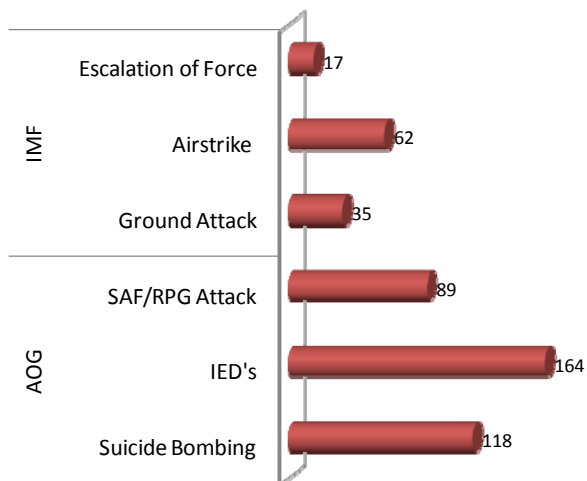


ANSO Fig 17: Total conflict related civilian fatalities and cause, Jan-Mar, 2010

■ AOG ■ IMF



ANSO Fig 18: Leading cause of conflict related civilian deaths, Jan-Mar 2010



Gross fatality figures (Fig 16) show more deaths in all categories over Q1 09 except NGOs which remains at 2. Gross **IMF fatalities are 79% higher** (66-118). Figure 17 shows a **45% increase in civilian fatalities** over Q1 09 (342-496). AOG remain responsible for bulk of these (76%) with IMF decreasing their percentage of the total from 32% to 24% but increasing in actual terms from 109-116 persons. The leading cause of civilian death so far (Fig 18) is being caught in an IED while civilians deaths caused by suicide attacks have increased by more than 260% from Q1 last year (32-118). On the IMF side airstrikes have killed about 70% more civilians than ground operations and **EOF deaths are up by 143%** (7-17).

Caveat: Beyond the NGO sector our fatality counts are based on our reports only. We do try to verify major fatalities with hospitals, journalists and NGO at the scene but are often forced to take a 'middle ground' estimate of counts. We have no independent means of verifying combat casualties and suggest this data be taken as indicative of trends rather than wholly accurate counts.

REPORT END

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