

SUMMARY & ASSESSMENT

By the end of September, AOG initiated attacks had decreased by 32% compared to Q.3 period last year, ANSF-IMF activity levels had retracted collectively by 24%, conflict-related civilian deaths were down by 14%, the total number of NGO security incidents had fallen by 20% and the total number of NGO casualties (7 staff killed and 13 injured) had dropped by 62% and is currently at a four-year low.

In relation to NGO safety, the period has confirmed that the present reduction in NGO incidents stems primarily from a decreased exposure to opposition activity (in contrast to criminality which stagnated in absolute numbers and marked an increased rate of NGO robberies). NGO interaction with AOG took the form of 'deliberate and hostile' acts by opposition forces in 43% of all cases, 'accidental' targeting in 26%, while 18% were linked to effect-based operations ('influencing the population') with the remaining 13% relating to information gathering efforts conducted by AOG. Direct use of violence occurred in approximately half of the total though direct efforts by the opposition to inflict serious harm on NGO staff remained context specific and led to only 10 NGO casualties.

ANSO continues to assess that humanitarian agencies are not deliberately targeted at a policy level by any party to the conflict, although NGOs should be vigilant against complacency. Field reports indicate that opposition leadership is not always aware and capable (or willing) to either enforce a benign attitude towards humanitarians or counteract the immediate interests of individual commanders or groups, particularly at the local level. Despite this observation, accidental IEDs and collateral damage - rather than accurately-targeted AOG attacks - are currently assessed as the top risks to NGO safety country-wide.

This quarter also confirms that the overall de-escalation in the conflict noted previously was not a short-term variance but rather represents a new phase in the context. The co-evolutionary relationship between the two main parties is thus preserved with AOG and ANSF/IMF having authored a similar share of security incidents. Despite the de-escalation, AOG nonetheless enhanced their campaign against ANSF and demonstrated that the reduction of activity on their side has been an organized and controlled internal process rather than one that has been imposed on them by external efforts. This leaves ANSF in a position where they will need to exhibit a strong pro-active stance in order to fill the deficit as IMF leaves.

ANSO concludes that the opposition will stay well positioned to counter-balance whatever strategy will be implemented by national and international security forces post-transition. Given that there is no plausible future scenario in which the IEA do not play a notable political and military role, we reiterate our long-standing advisory that a policy of holistic engagement with the opposition - as part of a clearly articulated 'acceptance strategy' - is, and will become, increasingly fundamental to NGO safety beyond the transition period.

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The views expressed in this report remain the sole responsibility of the author.

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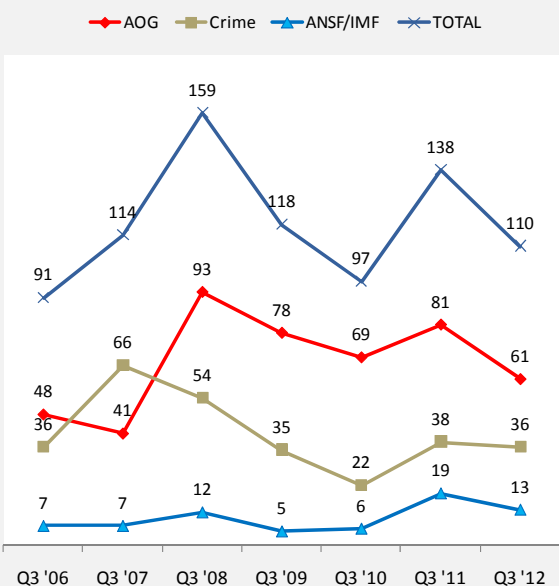
NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
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Part 1.

NGO Trends

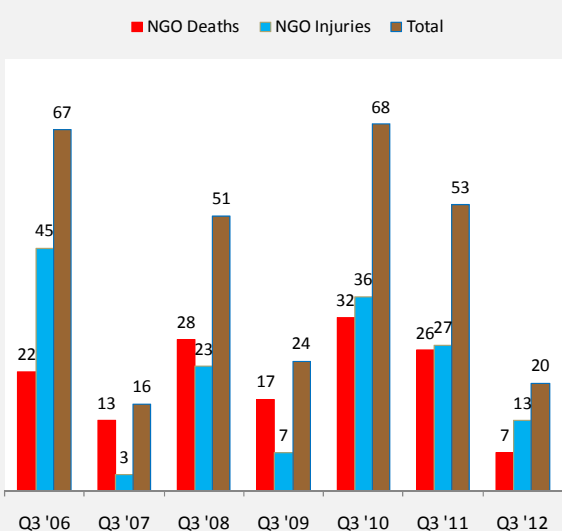
1.1 General NGO Incident Trends

ANSO: Comparison of NGO incident volumes by author, Q3 periods only, 2006-2012



The total volume of NGO security incidents (all authors combined) has regressed by 20% by end of Q3 when compared to last year (from 138 to 110, *first chart left*). The incident volumes disaggregated by author validate the positive correlation between the general downscale of AOG activity country-wide (down by 32%, *section 2.1*) and the drop in the number of NGO incidents authored by the opposition (down by 25%). Meanwhile, criminal incidents display sustained levels resulting in a proportionate increase of criminality in the NGO incident total from 28% at Q3 2011 to the current 33% with criminal robberies being the most prominent category this period. The share of NGO incidents authored by Afghan and International Military forces marked a 32% reduction on 2011 with the main causative factor being less IMF scrutiny of NGO medical facilities in the East and Central, which is also representative of the IMF draw-down (*not shown*).

ANSO: NGO casualties @ Q3 periods only, 2006-12

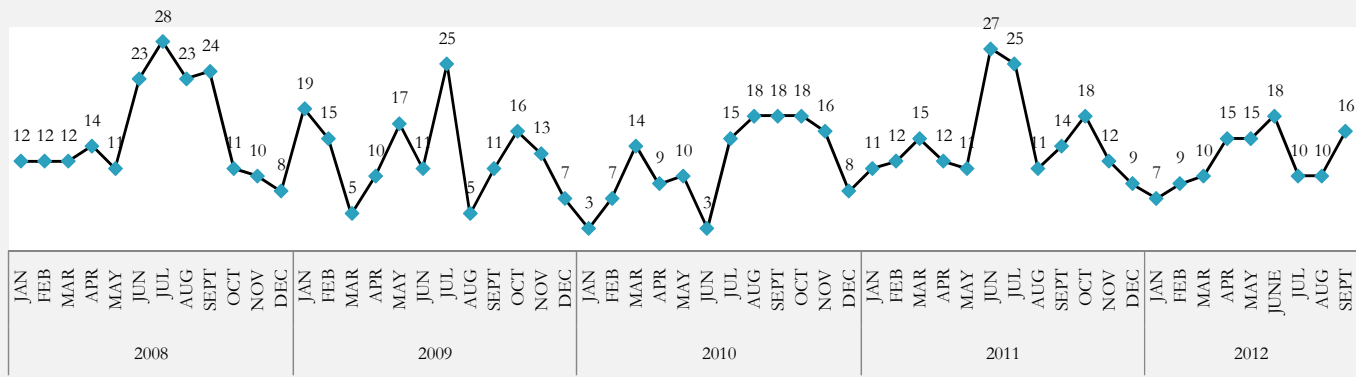


NGO casualty figures (staff killed/injured) are at a four-year low marking a 62% decrease on Q3 2011 (from 53 to 20, *second chart left*) incl. almost four times less NGO fatalities. One third of the casualties this year were ascribed to criminality, and nearly two thirds to the opposition (*not shown*).

In terms of seasonal patterns, July and August displayed an unusual downscale - assessed to be mainly a result of reduced NGO movements during the Ramadan period - but the September levels returned to the long-term seasonal patterns (*bottom*).

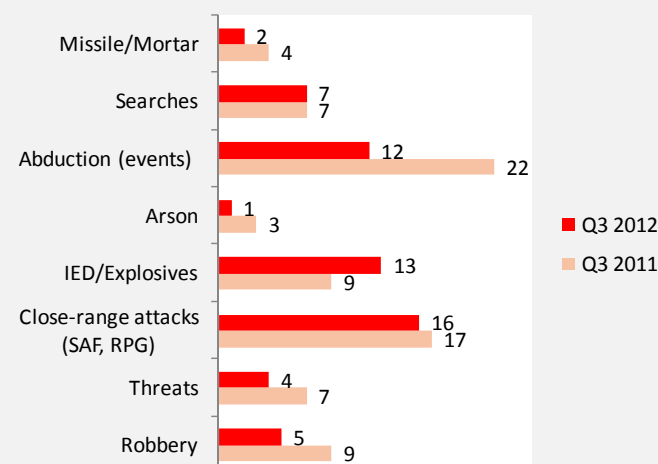
The data supports a conclusion that the volume of NGO incidents remains driven by the seasonal overlap of peak conflict times with peak NGO exposure rather than by any sustained targeting of NGOs by any author.

ANSO: Total NGO security incidents, all authors, countrywide, by month 2008-2012



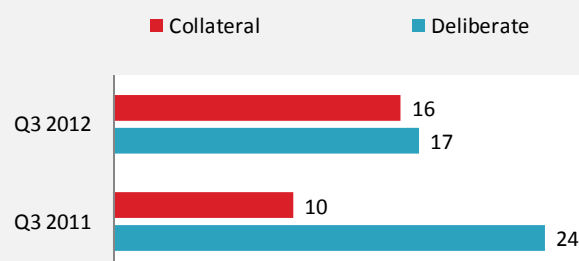
1.2 AOG-initiated NGO Incidents

ANSO: NGO Incidents by AOG at Q3 2011-12



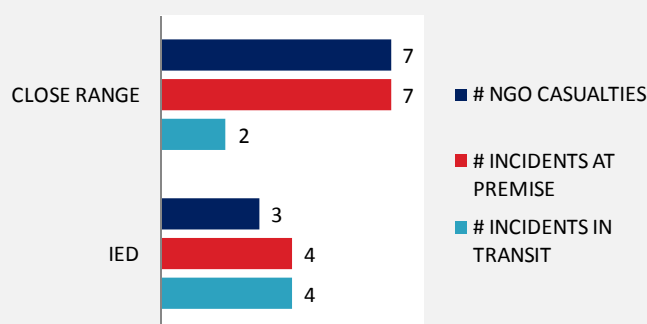
The tactical distribution of NGO incidents caused by the opposition (*top left*) shows a regression in the volume of NGO abductions. This year, 8 out of 12 cases were assessed as 'detentions for interrogation' with the staff typically released after 1-4 days in captivity. The number of abducted NGO members also dropped considerably from 144 at Q3 last year to the current 24 (*not shown*). In counterpoint, kinetic attacks - 54% of the total (close range attacks such as SAF, stand-off attacks such as IED or mortars) - remained mostly stable, the exception being the IED portion which has risen. The intent behind AOG incidents related to NGO indicates that 43% were 'targeted & hostile actions', 26% were 'accidental', 18% represented AOG efforts to 'influence the population' and 13% were 'information gathering' (*not shown*).

ANSO: Kinetic attacks on NGO by AOG 2011-12



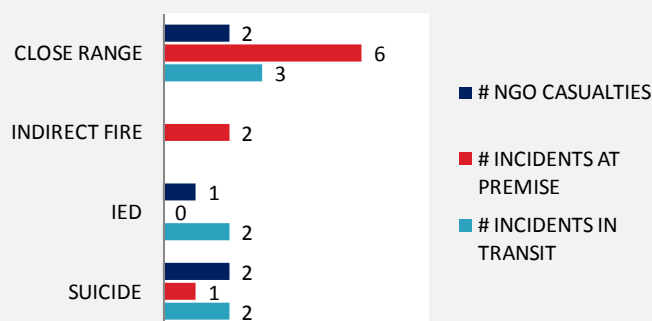
In the category of kinetic attacks, 'deliberate' attacks retracted compared to Q3 last year and concluded on par with 'collateral' impacts which increased (*chart left*). Deliberate attacks encompass all types of armed attacks targeting and impacting NGOs including intentional or indiscriminate strikes (such as IEDs triggered by NGO vehicles) whereas 'collateral' describe situations when NGOs were 'caught' in attacks carried out against a separate target (clashes with the security forces, shelling of district centers, IEDs on non-NGO vehicles).

ANSO: Q3 2012 Deliberate AOG attacks on NGO



Deliberate attacks (28% of AOG total) consisted primarily of close-range attacks, followed by IEDs (*third chart left*). The total of 5 separate close-range attacks caused 7 NGO casualties. Of these, 2 were linked to NGO profile, another 2 targeted local NGO staff rather for their personal profile (village elder, civil society activist) and one was a circumstantial escalation after NGO staff attempted to avoid an AOG roadblock. We conclude that the decisions to harm NGO staff purposefully were context-specific and did not reflect systemic or routine targeting.

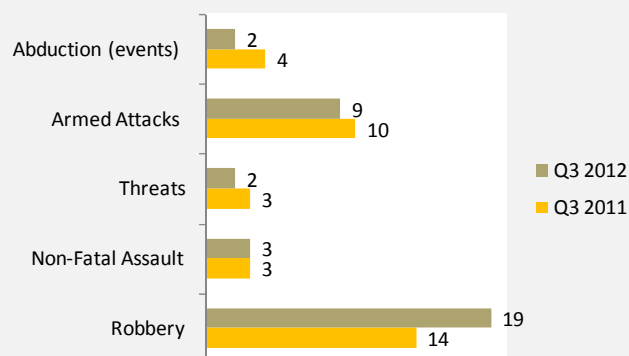
ANSO: Q3 2012 NGO collateral impact by AOG



Although the volume of collateral incidents also remains low, the data shows that NGO premises were more frequently impacted than NGO staff in transit (9 vs. 7 cases, *bottom left*). 7 out of 9 impacts on NGO premises involved clinics and compounds in Nangarhar, Laghman and Wardak.

1.3 NGO Incidents Attributed to Criminality

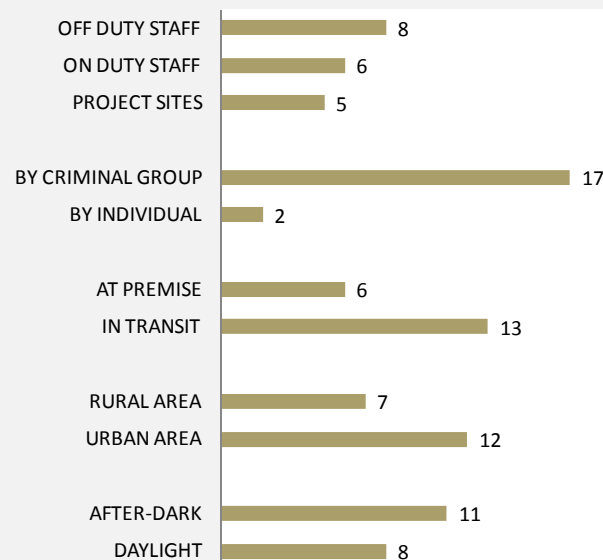
ANSO: Crime-attributed NGO Incidents by type at Q3 2011 vs 2012



The Q3 2012 period concluded with 36 NGO incidents attributed to crime. 13 cases of the total involved direct violence on NGO members, including 8 cases of intimidations or personal retributions as opposed to 5 robberies (*not shown*).

The comparison with the patterns of Q3 2011 supports the conclusion that NGOs have adopted effective mitigation strategies for most types of criminal incidents and that the NGO staff cannot be singled out as a particularly affected segment of population despite access to significant NGO resources. This assessment is tempered by the slight increase in the number of criminal robberies this year on Q3 2011 (*top left*).

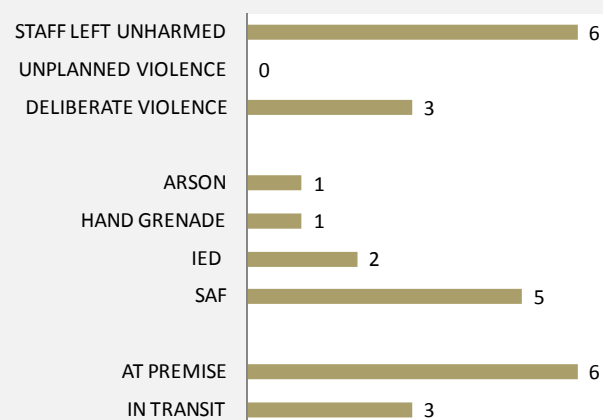
ANSO: Q3 2012 Criminal robberies of NGO (19 incidents in total)



Unpacking the data on criminal robberies shows that the NGO staff were seriously harmed only when they offered resistance to the criminals such as during burglaries or while attempting to drive thru criminal road blocks (*not shown*). Statistical data (*center left*) prove that NGO staff are nearly as likely to face robberies when they are off-duty as during their duty movements or on project sites and that after-dark movements further increase this risk.

In urban areas, NGO staff are less resilient to organized street criminality set up by more than one attacker - such as motorcycle-borne 'snatch bag' teams or 'slashed tyre' schemes (6 cases combined) - particularly in Kabul city and Jalalabad, in the vicinity of banks and in traffic along main city arteries. The data specific to rural areas show that 5 out of 7 robberies affected medical NGOs, more frequently attracted by the display of high-value items such as vehicles and solar panels rather than by medical equipment or drugs (*not shown*).

ANSO: Q3 2012 Criminal armed attacks on NGO (9 incidents in total)



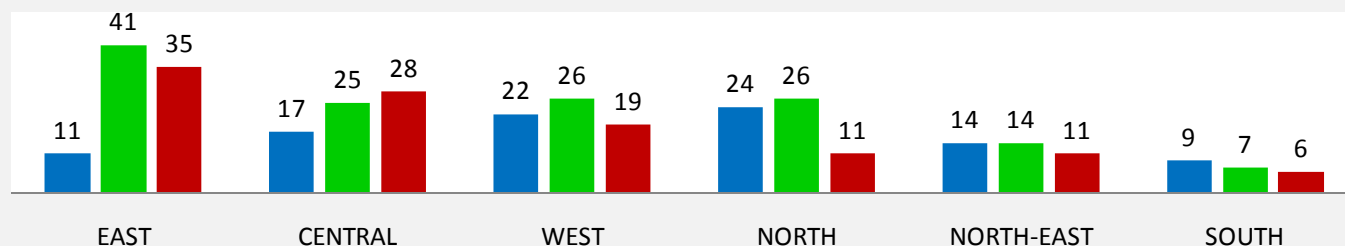
Besides robberies, armed attacks (defined as close-range or stand-off attacks with the use of fire arms or explosives) were the second most frequent category and involved a wide range of motives from personal disputes to NGO acceptance issues. The data (*bottom left*) demonstrates that 2 out of 3 cases were not meant to harm the NGO staff but to communicate a warning although there were at least 2 instances when the incidents escalated after initial warnings had not been addressed.

1.4 NGO Incident Geography

Regional data (*below*) show that NGO incidents have *slightly increased* in Central region but *de-escalated* elsewhere when comparing the Q3 periods of 2012 and 2011. The escalation in Central was mainly due to the increased impact of urban criminality on NGOs in Kabul city (from 5 to 9 incidents). In all other regions, the regression was linked primarily to decreased AOG activity. In the Eastern region, this trend was driven by the absence of AOG-initiated incidents in Paktya (as opposed to 5 AOG-initiated incidents at Q3 2011) while less NGO interaction with AOG in Ghor and Herat was recorded in the West, as well as in Balkh, Faryab, Jawzjan and Sari Pul in the North. Balkh also exhibited a significant absence of criminal incidents (as opposed to 5 last year). There was less variance in the North-East with the exception of a drop in criminal incidents in Badakhshan. NGO patterns in the South combined a light NGO footprint outside the main urban centers with less indiscriminate criminal or political targeting than in other regions.

ANSO: NGO Incidents per ANSO region, by end Q3 only, 2010-2012

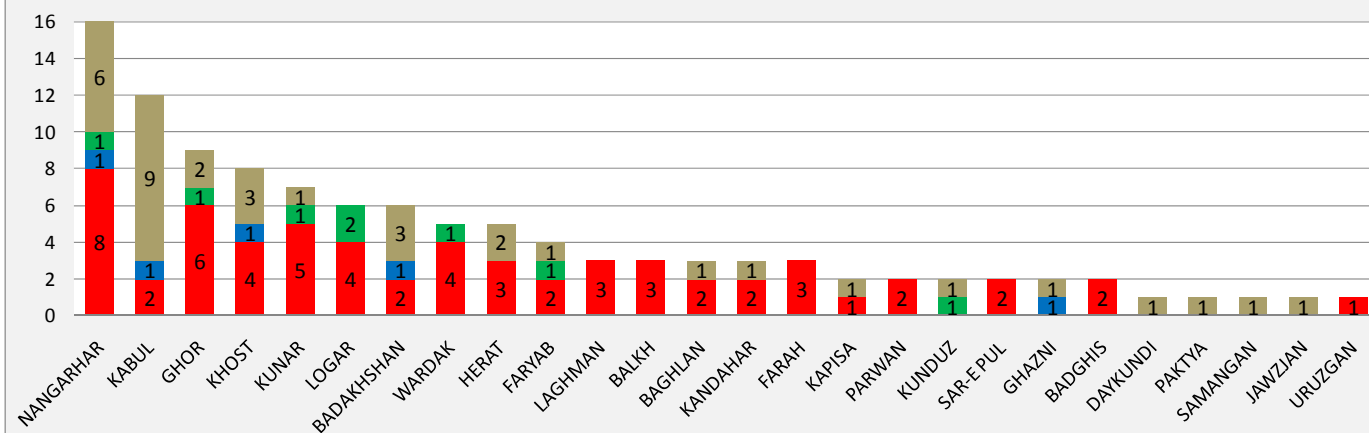
■ Q3 2010 ■ Q3 2011 ■ Q3 2012



The provincial data by end of Q3 2012 alone (*below*) display that criminality affected most frequently NGOs in Kabul and Nangarhar. Rural areas in Nangarhar province also ranked top in terms of NGO exposure to AOG activity, comprising mainly of IED detonations and collateral damage, and impacting most frequently medical and demining NGOs (resp. 10 and 4 incidents out of the total 16). The overlap of NGO presence and AOG activity was apparent in Ghor, Kunar, Khost, Logar and Wardak where approx. 2 out of every 3 AOG-authored NGO incidents involved kinetic activity (collateral or deliberate) such as conventional (SAF, RPG), suicide and stand-off (IED, mortar) attacks. Serious NGO incidents are mapped in section 1.5.

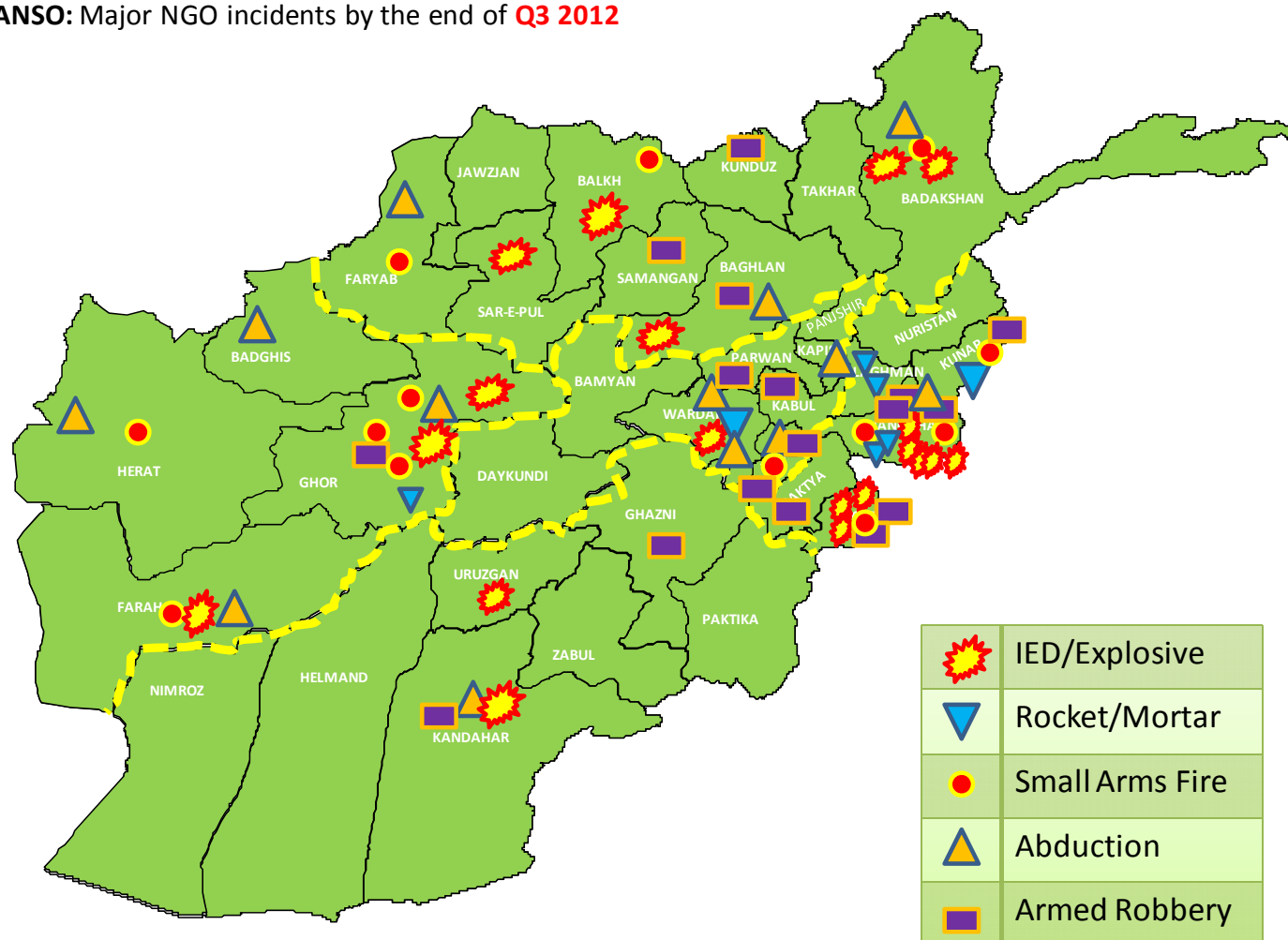
ANSO: NGO Incidents per province and author by end Q3 2012 period (absent provinces had no NGO incidents)

■ AOG ■ IMF ■ ANSF ■ CRIME

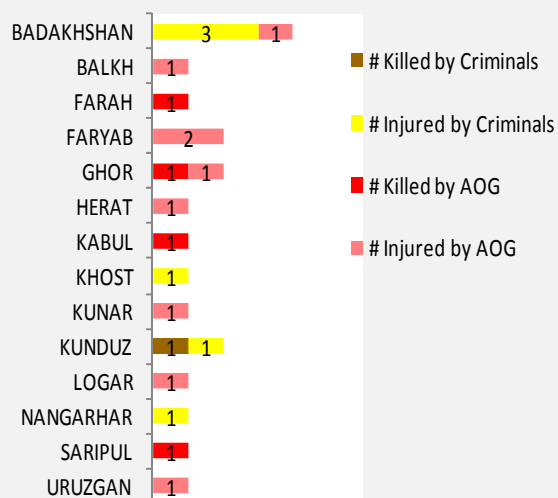


1.5 Mapping of major NGO incidents

ANSO: Major NGO incidents by the end of Q3 2012



ANSO: NGO staff casualties at Q3 2012 by province, author



The geographic distribution of major NGO incidents (all authors) by end of Q3 2012 (*above*) encompasses seasonal variations. Whereas the concentration of major incidents in the East (Nangarhar, Khost) and in Ghor was a development established already during the spring, additional visible hotspots including Kunar, the contested parts of Central (Wardak, Logar), Farah and most of the NGO incidents in the South have only formed during the summer conflict peak. NGO staff casualties were recorded both in contested and in more stable provinces (*left*). The fatality count remains low at 7 cases including 5 which could be attributed to the opposition and criminality. Among the fatalities, 2 resulted from AOG collateral impact (an IED in Sari Pul, a BBIED in Kabul), 2 were targeted killings by local AOG in Ghor and Farah, and 1 staff fell victim to an unwanted escalation during a burglary in Kunduz. Another 2 cases involved an NGO staff member participating and getting killed in an ANP/militia shoot out in Ghor and an unknown cause of death to an NGO guard in Herat.

1.6 Security Risk Assessment Matrix

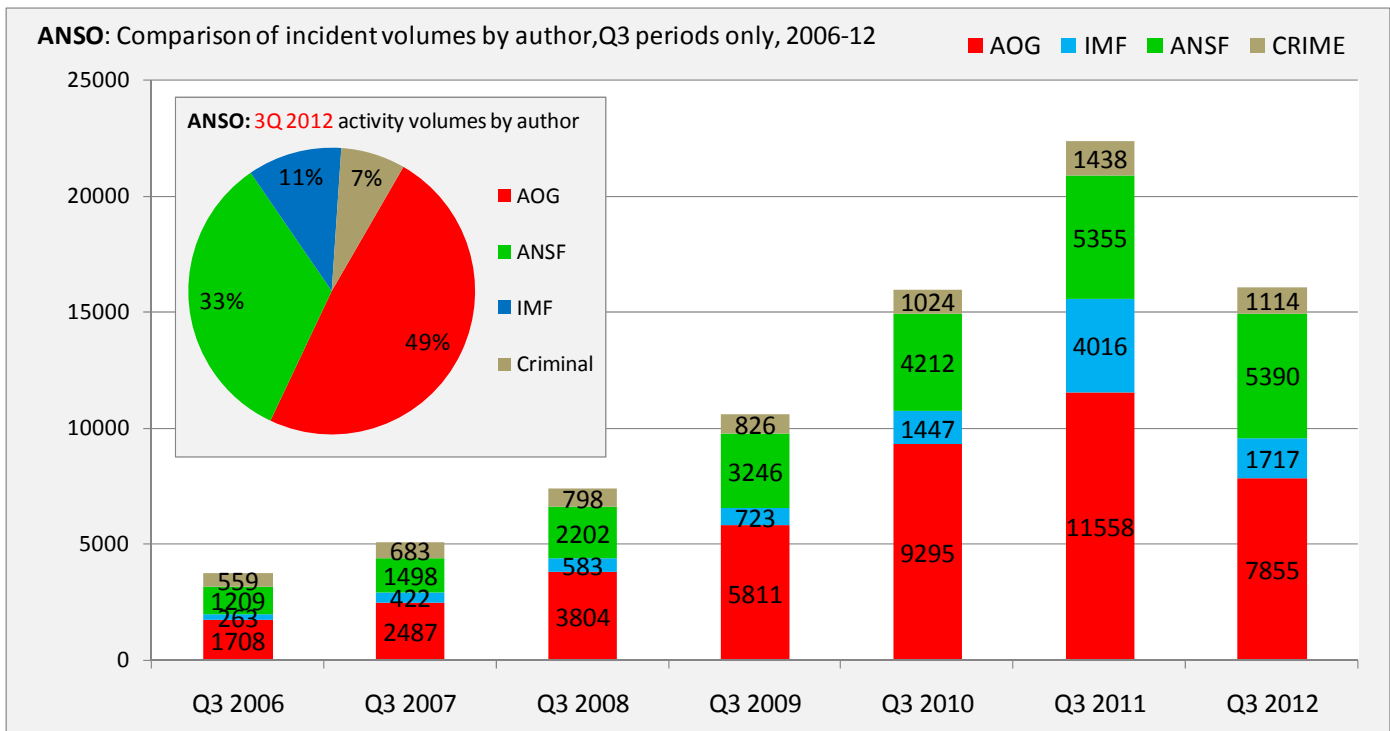
The below presents our current ranking of the primary risks to NGOs, per ANSO operational area, along with the recommended mitigation tactic. 'Collateral damage' and 'Accidental IED strikes' are considered the top risks to NGO staff and operations. However, the overall likelihood of encountering such incidents is assessed as Moderate to Low in all the regions except for South where it ranks High. Country-wide, NGOs can substantially reduce the risks by avoiding proximity to typical security targets (specifically IMF, ANSF, GOA elements and AOG), maintaining appropriate NGO travel hours (no off peak travel) and profiles (only using high profile vehicles in the case where local armed groups have agreed to recognize the NGO logo) as well as installing effective anti-blast protection in compounds and on project sites, in particular in district administrative centers in 'contested' areas.

NGO RISK ANALYSIS MATRIX (Likelihood x Impact=Risk)		Impact					Risk Rating	
		Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High		
Likelihood	Very Low	1	1	2	3	3	1	Negligible Risk
	Low	1	2	3	3	3	2	Mild Risk
	Moderate	2	2	3	3	4	3	Moderate Risk
	High	3	3	3	4	5	4	Serious Risk
	Very High	3	3	4	5	5	5	Unacceptably High Risk
COUNTRYWIDE								
Type of Incident		Likelihood	Impact	ANSO Risk Rating		Proposed Primary Mitigation Measure		
Collateral Damage		Moderate	High	3		Minimize exposure in target rich environments, implement contingency plans		
Accidental IED		Moderate	High	3		Maintain NGO travel hours and minimize proximity to potential targets		
Criminality in Transit		Moderate	Moderate	3		Travel by day, avoid routines and displaying valuables, address off-duty travel safety		
Deliberate Targeting by AOG		Low	V.High	3		Maintain neutrality of programming and reach out to all parties for acceptance		
AOG Checkpoint		Moderate	Moderate	3		Maintain NGO travel times & understand high profile vs low profile advantages		
EASTERN REGION								
Type of Incident		Likelihood	Impact	ANSO Risk Rating		Proposed Primary Mitigation Measure		
Collateral Damage		Moderate	V.High	4		Minimize exposure in target rich environments, hardening of facilities (protection)		
Accidental IED		Moderate	V.High	4		Maintain NGO travel hours and minimize proximity to potential targets		
Deliberate Targeting by AOG		Moderate	V. High	4		Maintain neutrality of programming and reach out to all parties for acceptance		
Criminality in Transit		Moderate	Moderate	3		Travel by day, avoid routines and displaying valuables, address off-duty travel safety		
AOG Checkpoint		Low	Moderate	3		Maintain NGO travel times & understand high profile vs low profile advantages		
NORTH & NORTHEASTERN REGION								
Type of Incident		Likelihood	Impact	ANSO Risk Rating		Proposed Primary Mitigation Measure		
Collateral Damage		Low	High	3		Minimize exposure in target rich environments, hardening of facilities (protection)		
Accidental IED		Low	High	3		Maintain NGO travel hours and minimize proximity to potential targets		
AOG Checkpoint		Low	Moderate	3		Maintain NGO travel times & understand high profile vs low profile advantages		
Criminality in Transit		Moderate	Moderate	3		Travel by day, avoid routines and displaying valuables, address off-duty travel safety		
Intimidation		Moderate	Moderate	3		Maintain community acceptance & cultivate contacts with stakeholders		
WESTERN REGION								
Type of Incident		Likelihood	Impact	ANSO Risk Rating		Proposed Primary Mitigation Measure		
Collateral Damage		Moderate	High	3		Minimize exposure in target rich environments, hardening of facilities (protection)		
Accidental IED		Moderate	High	3		Maintain NGO travel hours and minimize proximity to potential targets		
Abduction		Moderate	Moderate	3		Establish legitimacy, monitor profile/acceptance, & employ local staff		
Deliberate Targeting by AOG		Low	V.High	3		Maintain neutrality of programming and reach out to all parties for acceptance		
Criminality in Transit		Moderate	Low	2		Travel by day, avoid routines and displaying valuables, address off-duty travel safety		
SOUTHERN REGION								
Type of Incident		Likelihood	Impact	ANSO Risk Rating		Proposed Primary Mitigation Measure		
Collateral Damage		High	V.High	5		Minimize exposure in target rich environments, hardening of facilities (protection)		
Accidental IED		High	V.High	5		Maintain NGO travel hours and minimize proximity to potential targets		
Deliberate Targeting by AOG		Moderate	V.High	4		Maintain neutrality of programming and reach out to all parties for acceptance		
Criminality in Transit		Moderate	Low	2		Travel by day, avoid routines and displaying valuables, address off-duty travel safety		
CENTRAL REGION								
Type of Incident		Likelihood	Impact	ANSO Risk Rating		Proposed Primary Mitigation Measure		
Criminality in Transit		Moderate	Low	2		Travel by day, avoid routines and displaying valuables, address off-duty travel safety		
AOG Robbery		Moderate	Low	2		Avoid displaying valuables at project sites, monitor profile & avoid routines		
Deliberate Targeting by AOG		V.Low	V.High	3		Maintain neutrality of programming and reach out to all parties for acceptance		
Accidental IED		Low	High	3		Maintain NGO travel hours and minimize proximity to potential targets		
Collateral Damage		Moderate	High	3		Minimize exposure in target rich environments, hardening of facilities (protection)		

Part 2.

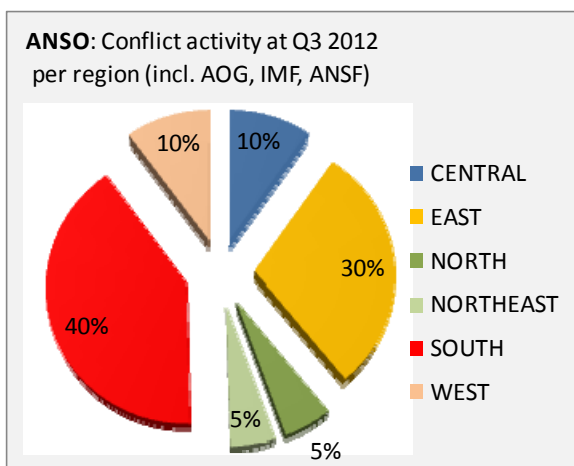
State of the Conflict

2.1 Context Overview



The de-escalation trend noted earlier this year has been maintained throughout the summer season with the total activity volume (by all authors) decreasing by 28% on Q3 last year. Whereas AOG activity volume decreased by 32% and IMF volume by 57%, ANSF activity remained stable (+0.7%). Criminality has also decreased by 23%. Core conflict activity remains centered on South and East (*bottom left*). That the de-escalation has continued during the peak 'fighting season' confirms that rather than being a short-term variation, it denotes a durable new phase of the conflict. Whereas this is undoubtedly a positive development, the actual incident volumes show that NGOs continue to operate in a more volatile environment than just three years ago when ISAF initiated the troop surge.

Further, it is important to note that despite the lower 'content', the conflict rate has followed exactly the same seasonal pattern (peak & trough, *not shown*) and the activity input was equally shared between the opposition and the security forces (49% vs. 44%, *pie chart above*). This proves that the de-escalation is organized and controlled rather than chaotic. We conclude that the reduction on AOG side is a deliberate choice in response to the on-going IMF disengagement.



The current phase of the conflict leaves NGOs in an environment which remains violent and dynamic, but also, at least for the moment, stable. The key component which could reverse this situation in the short term is the ANSF position in the conflict. The activity share at Q3 indicates that the ANSF input has stagnated in comparison with Q3 2011 while the IMF input decreased considerably (for operations in which the IMF were assessed as the primary author as opposed to, for example, their contributions to ANSF-led operations). This suggests that for the moment, ANSF are not proactively 'filling the gap' left by IMF departure.

2.2 Incident Distribution & Comparison

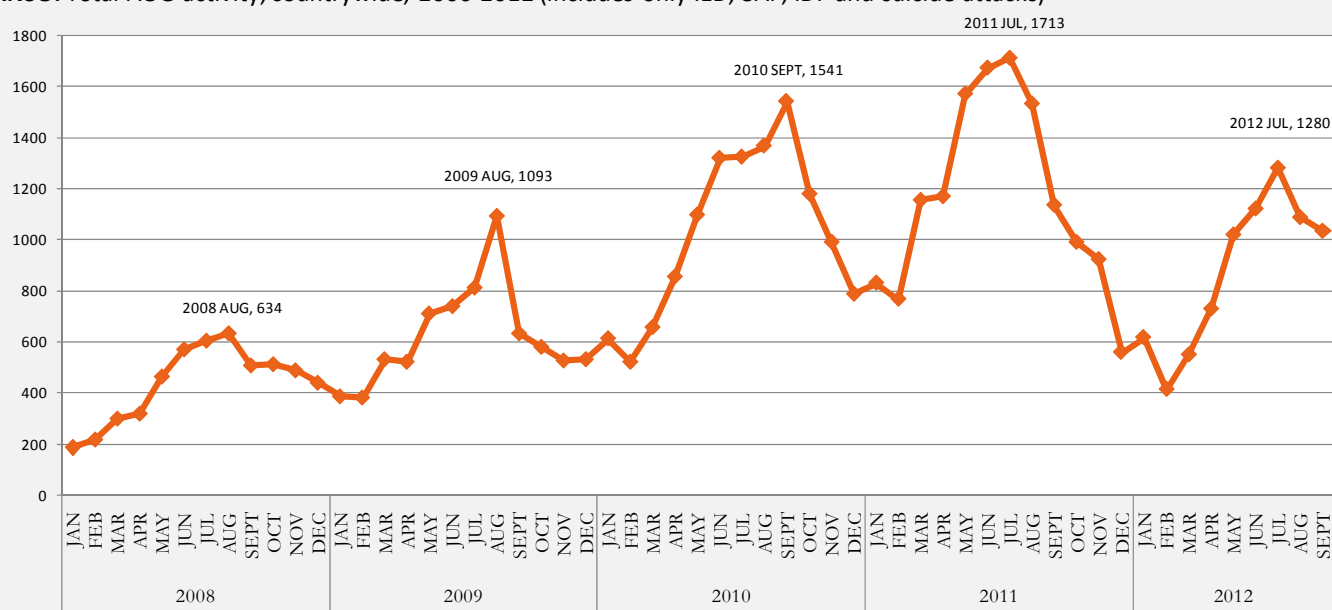
The complete account of all incidents recorded per province and author at the end of Q.3 2012 is presented in the table below, sorted by the highest combined incident total (all authors). The data provides an overview of how unstable certain areas are. For reference, the table includes country-wide provincial average for each specific sector and the daily incident rate. The actual values in the provincial sections reaching above the average value are highlighted in red.

While some sectors could be viewed as having a positive/negative effect on NGO safety, this chart should not be used alone when assessing NGO safety and accessibility since it does not encapsulates other crucial factors such as local dynamics, actor mapping and NGO history.

PROVINCE	NGO INCIDENTS	INCIDENTS TOTAL	AOG	IMF	ANSF	CRIME	DAILY INCIDENT RATE
<i>Country</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>270</i>	<i>240</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>1.7</i>
Kandahar	3	1538	806	121	580	31	5.7
Helmand	0	1360	600	252	495	13	5.0
Khost	8	1274	501	191	485	97	4.7
Nangarhar	16	1267	513	110	610	34	4.7
Kunar	7	1179	1008	70	79	22	4.4
Ghazni	2	1150	729	232	168	21	4.3
Paktika	0	725	449	148	121	7	2.7
Herat	5	685	236	12	368	69	2.5
Kabul	12	635	56	11	465	103	2.4
Uruzgan	1	613	343	35	221	14	2.3
Farah	3	560	314	15	203	28	2.1
Zabul	0	500	197	115	188	0	1.9
Faryab	4	472	246	17	113	96	1.7
Paktya	1	437	236	73	110	18	1.6
Wardak	5	435	267	73	85	10	1.6
Badghis	2	421	263	22	112	24	1.6
Logar	6	377	186	73	106	12	1.4
Laghman	3	369	259	24	64	22	1.4
Kunduz	2	352	132	29	144	47	1.3
Baghlan	3	295	110	27	130	28	1.1
Balkh	3	274	84	6	125	59	1.0
Kapisa	2	207	142	15	41	9	0.8
Ghor	9	148	69	2	37	40	0.5
Takhar	0	145	13	3	89	40	0.5
Parwan	2	144	81	1	42	20	0.5
Badakhshan	6	139	54	10	46	29	0.5
Jawzjan	1	135	69	5	43	18	0.5
Sar-e Pul	2	101	68	2	19	12	0.4
Nuristan	0	100	79	10	10	1	0.4
Samangan	1	88	13	1	44	30	0.3
Nimroz	0	62	22	10	24	6	0.2
Daykundi	1	32	5	1	10	16	0.1
Bamyan	0	29	13	1	9	6	0.1
Panjshir	0	13	4	0	4	5	0.0

2.3 Armed Opposition Group (AOG) Activity

ANSO: Total AOG activity, countrywide, 2006-2012 (includes only IED, SAF, IDF and suicide attacks)

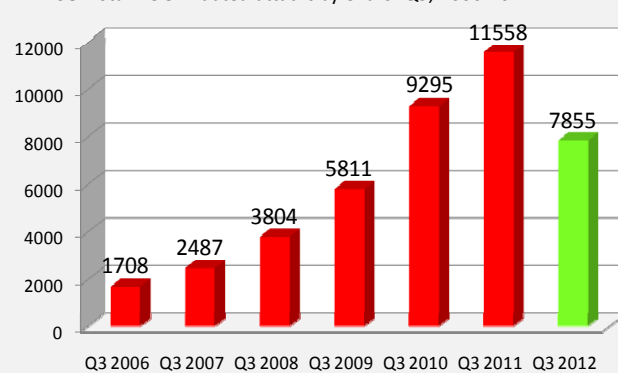


The number of AOG kinetic attacks has decreased by 32% on Q3 last year (*right*) and the average daily attack rate (all/270) has dropped from 42 to 30 attacks/day. Despite this lower input, AOG activity has followed the established seasonal pattern - building up during late spring/early summer, peaking in mid-summer and adopting a downward trend afterwards (*above*). The consistency of this approach reinforces the conclusion that the de-escalation on AOG side is an organized and controlled decision, eventually matched to counter-balance the input from AOG opponents (*see 2.1*).

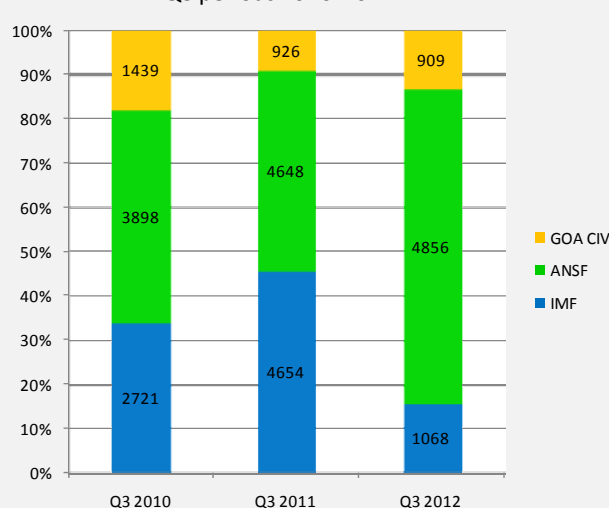
However, AOG targeting patterns denote a significant shift from IMF to ANSF targets with the percentage share of ANSF targets increasing from 45% to 71% and the share of IMF falling both in absolute numbers and in percentage share (46% to 16%, *bottom right*). Prioritizing ANSF targets is an expected, but still crucial operational re-adjustment which the ANSF will have to address in order not to fall into deficit post-transition. AOG attacks on GOA-affiliated civilian targets (premises, members or perceived/actual supporters) also proportionately increased from 9% to 13%, indicating that the shaping operations maintain an important place in the current AOG war efforts.

The tactical composition of AOG attacks remained consistent with approximately 59% being close-range assaults (SAF, RPG) mostly in small unit ambushes, 40% being IED or stand-off attacks (mortars, rockets) and the rest being special operations including suicide vectors (*not shown*).

ANSO: Total AOG initiated attacks by end of Q3, 2006-2012



ANSO: Number of AOG attacks per target group (only attacks where target could be determined), Q3 periods 2010-2012

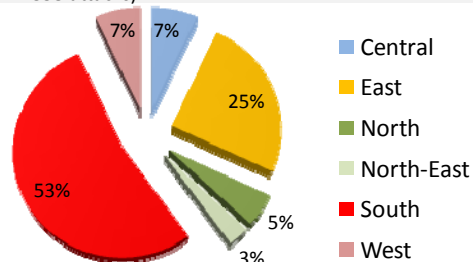


2.4 AOG Attack Rate Comparison Q3 2012 vs. 2011

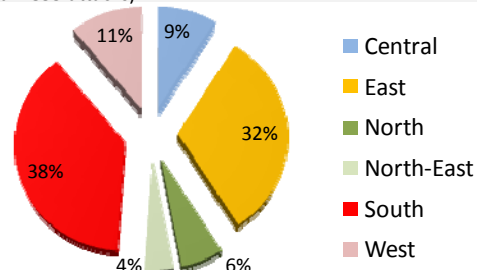
PROVINCE	TOTAL ATTACKS Q3 2010	TOTAL ATTACKS Q3 2011	TOTAL ATTACKS Q3 2012	ACTUAL CHANGE Q3 2012 vs. Q3 2011	% CHANGE Q3 2012 vs. Q3 2011	
Nimroz	97	94	22	-72	-77%	Above average decrease
Helmand	1178	2226	600	-1626	-73%	
Daykundi	22	17	5	-12	-71%	
Paktya	346	509	236	-273	-54%	
Paktika	610	943	449	-494	-52%	
Takhar	113	27	13	-14	-52%	
Zabul	296	395	197	-198	-50%	
Ghazni	1111	1342	729	-613	-46%	
Khost	635	895	501	-394	-44%	
Kabul	112	97	56	-41	-42%	
Balkh	119	136	84	-52	-38%	
Jawzjan	50	100	69	-31	-31%	Below Average Decrease
Sar-e Pul	49	93	68	-25	-27%	
Kunduz	295	180	132	-48	-27%	
Kandahar	963	1070	806	-264	-25%	
Badghis	270	308	263	-45	-15%	
Ghor	63	80	69	-11	-14%	
Wardak	386	308	267	-41	-13%	
Herat	203	264	236	-28	-11%	
Parwan	63	86	81	-5	-6%	
Kunar	1174	1022	1008	-14	-1%	
Uruzgan	266	346	343	-3	-1%	Growth
Logar	199	186	186	0	0%	
Faryab	190	239	246	7	3%	
Badakhshan	30	49	54	5	10%	
Samangan	14	11	13	2	18%	
Nangarhar	392	427	513	86	20%	
Nuristan	47	60	79	19	32%	
Farah	192	218	314	96	44%	
Laghman	140	172	259	87	51%	
Kapisa	101	92	142	50	54%	
Baghlan	162	65	110	45	69%	
Bamyan	4	7	13	6	86%	
Panjshir	2	1	4	3	300%	

The table compares actual AOG attack numbers (all types) per province at the Q3 stages 2011-2012. For reference, AOG attack volumes at Q3 2010 are also represented. The 'average' being referred to is the 32% country-wide decrease in opposition attacks. The pie charts show the regional split between 2011 and 2012 displaying a significant variance between South and East. The South exhibited a 51% reduction in actual AOG attack volume compared to Q3 last year, from 6418 to 3147 attacks whereas in the East the actual volume regressed by 32% from 3804 to 2596 attacks. This transfer shows that even though AOG are doing less in absolute numbers, they have decided to focus on the Eastern region where they shoulder less IMF pressure.

ANSO: Distribution of AOG attacks per region, Q3 2011
(total 11558 attacks)



ANSO: Distribution of AOG attacks per region, Q3 2012
(total 7855 attacks)

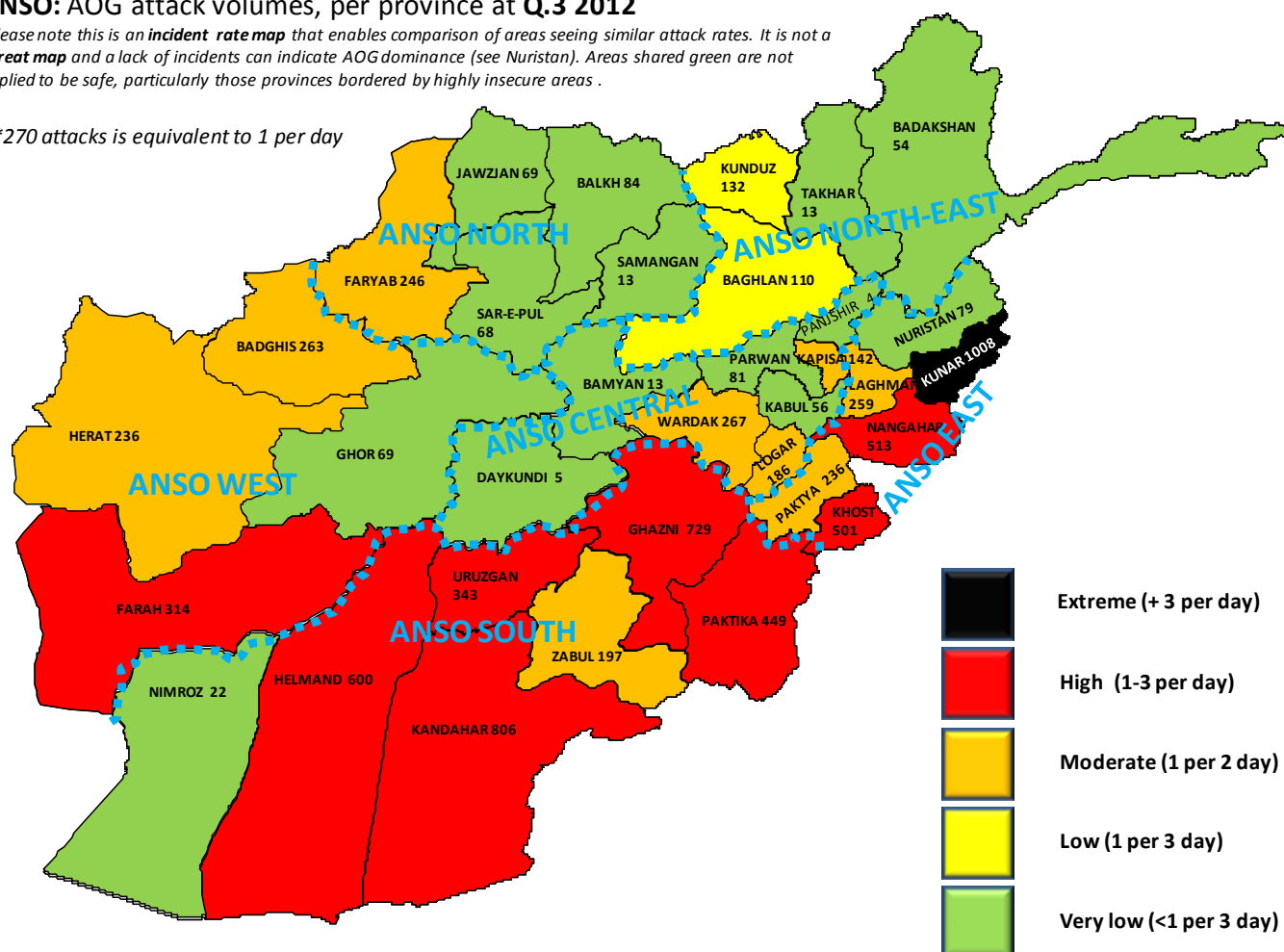


2.5 AOG Attack Rate Mapping

ANSO: AOG attack volumes, per province at Q.3 2012

(Please note this is an **incident rate map** that enables comparison of areas seeing similar attack rates. It is not a **threat map** and a lack of incidents can indicate AOG dominance (see Nuristan). Areas shared green are not implied to be safe, particularly those provinces bordered by highly insecure areas.

*270 attacks is equivalent to 1 per day

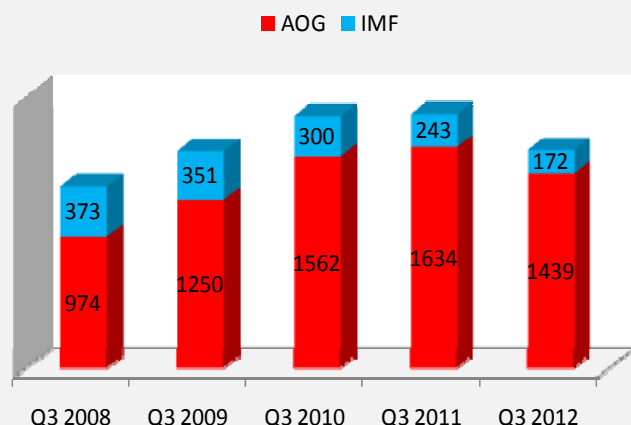


The map provides an overview of the total AOG initiated attacks per province as of the end of Q3 2012. Stand-out observations for us include:

(1) AOG attack rates in four provinces in the South (Helmand, Ghazni, Kandahar, Paktika) fell under 3 attacks/day compared to Q.3 2011, resulting in the 51% reduction in AOG attack volumes in this region over the same period. The tactical impact of the IMF surge in Helmand is undeniably the strongest variance between the two periods. Nonetheless, it is also obvious that all conflict parties understand that the transition process is running against the clock whereas the current AOG attack rate in Helmand (600 at Q.3) shows that the opposition continues to enjoy wide access in and out of the province. Kandahar and to a lesser extent, Farah and Uruzgan offer a strategic depth to the opposition - Farah featured a significant increase in AOG activity partly due to the presence of Helmandi networks. It is our conclusion that the IMF surge in Helmand had an impact on the opposition activity but failed to curtail their access in the South; (2) In the Eastern region, AOG downscaled their activity in the southern tier (Loya Paktya) but maintained their dominance in Kunar and Nuristan and visibly expanded in Nangarhar. AOG comfort zone in this upper tier of the region spilled over into Laghman and Kapisa, both provinces recently transitioned to ANSF; (3) Against the background of the current de-escalation phase, the 'red-orange' belt in South and East continues to form a contiguous conflict zone with a main AOG diversion front open along the Farah-Faryab axis.

2.6 Conflict-related Civilian Fatalities

ANSO: Civilian Fatalities by AOG & IMF
2008-12, Q3 periods only

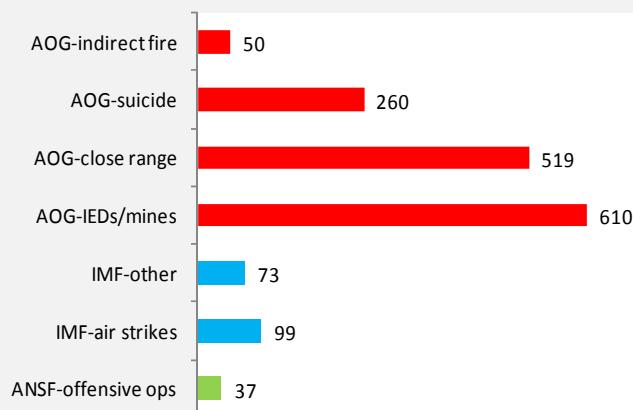


The total number of civilian fatalities caused by AOG and IMF conflict activity has decreased 14% from 1877 by Q3 last year to 1611 this year (*top left*). The percentage of those deaths attributed to the International Military has been steadily dropping from 28% in 2008 to just 11% in 2012. Inversely, the percentage attributed to the opposition has increased from 72% to 89%.

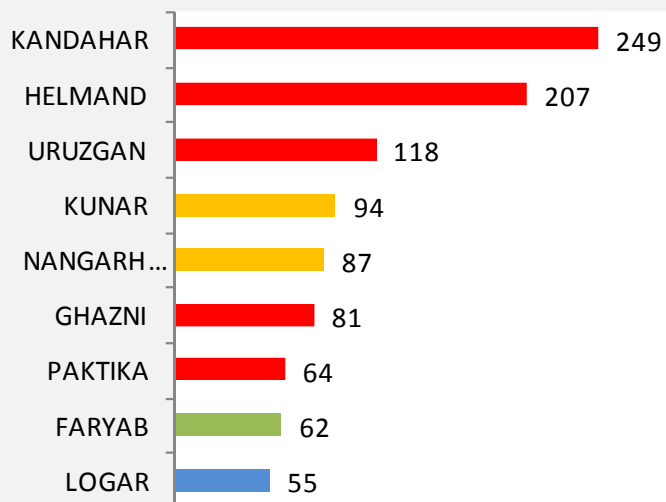
Close to 64% of all AOG-caused civilian fatalities this period have resulted collaterally from IED, indirect fire and suicide/complex attacks with IED activity being the single most lethal category (*center left*). The suicide attacks, which currently account for approximately 1% of AOG activity country-wide, maintain a disproportionate share (18%) of the AOG-caused fatalities, as this tactic is typically deployed in population centers (out of 84 suicide attacks this year, 16 caused more than 5 fatalities each; the same fatality count occurred in only 24 out of the total 2353 IED strikes). 37% of fatalities in AOG close-range attacks were collateral impacts during attacks on the security forces whereas the remainder were mainly targeted killings of civilians as a part of AOG intimidation and shaping efforts.

The majority of conflict fatalities have been in the Southern region (*bottom right*) with Kandahar, Helmand and Uruzgan alone accounting for 35% of the national total, and Ghazni with Paktika adding another 9%. An additional 4 provinces surpassed the national average of 49 civilian fatalities/province (*bottom left*).

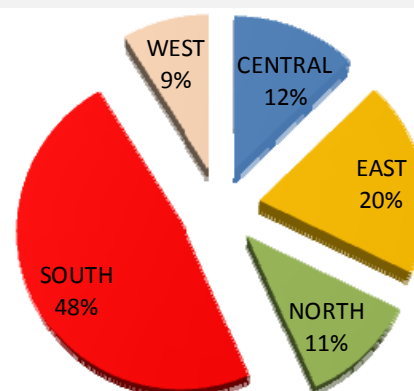
ANSO: Q3 2012, Number of Civilian Fatalities, by author & type



ANSO: Q3 2012, Civ. Fatalities/Province, Top 9 provinces (above 49 civ. killed)



ANSO: Civilian Fatalities at Q3 2012 by region
(1648 total, all authors)



Acronyms:

AOG - Armed Opposition Groups specifically Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban); Haqqani Network and Hezb-i-Islami Gulbiddin (HIG)

IEA - Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban)

ALP - Afghan Local Police

IMF - International Military Forces (specifically ISAF, USFOR-A, PRTs and SOF)

ANSF - Afghan National Security Forces (mostly Police & Army)

IED - Improvised Explosive Device (home made bomb)

IDF - Indirect Fire (rockets, mortars)

CAS - Close Air Support (airstrike)

SAF - Small Arms Fire (from a machine gun such as AK-47)

RPG - Rocket Propelled Grenade

ANSO REGIONS

For the purposes of this report, please note the following breakdown of provinces for the various ANSO Regions:

CENTRAL: Bamyan, Daykundi, Kabul, Kapisa, Logar, Panjshir, Parwan, Wardak

EAST: Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Nuristan, Paktya

SOUTH: Ghazni, Helmand, Kandahar, Nimroz, Paktika, Uruzgan, Zabul

NORTH: Balkh, Faryab, Jawzjan, Samangan, Sar-e Pul

NORTHEAST: Badakhshan, Baghlan, Takhar, Kunduz

WEST: Ghor, Badghis, Farah, Herat

REPORT ENDS

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