

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Suicide attacks penetrate Kabul, Baghlan, Herat, Paktya
- IMF operations in Kapisa and Laghman
- Complex “suicide wave” attempted in Khost
- Local Tajiks conflict with AOG and ANP in Muqur and Jawand districts of Badghis
- NGO’s attacked with RPG and IED’s

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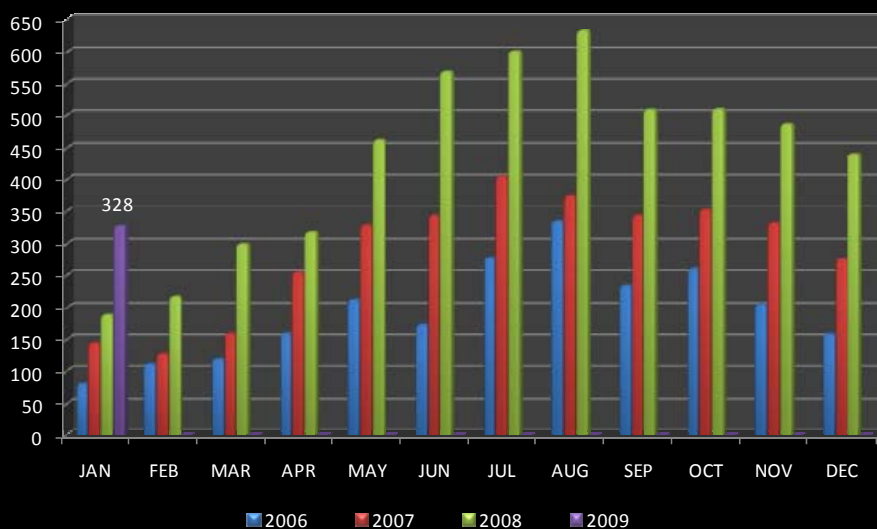
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NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
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COUNTRY SUMMARY

AOG Initiated Incidents: 2006 - 2009



Incident levels remain very high comparative to the same period last year (*above*). Suicide attacks have been escalating with successful strikes in more than six provinces within the period including an attempted “wave” attack in Khost which would have involved three coordinated strikes. Social unrest is emerging in Badakshan and Jawazjan related to criminal impunity of former warlords as well as political jockeying. Serious conflict is emerging in Badghis (Muqor and Jawand districts) with running battles between local Tajik’s and AOG attempting to establish a beachhead in the area. An Islamic Emirate has been proclaimed by AOG in Wama/Chap Dara area of Kunar and Nuristan. AOG operate freely in Kandahar.

NGO DATA & TRENDS

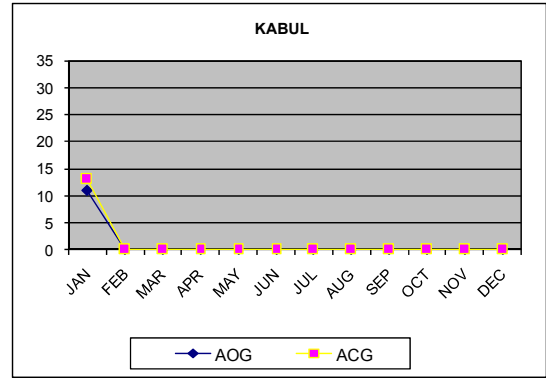
NGO have been victimized in a number of serious incidents this period including an RPG attack in Takhar, an IED placed on a gate in Nanghar and an office overrun in Kunar. Criminal elements attending a vehicle check-post in Jawzjan ‘asked for’ an NGO by name and indicted a solid awareness of the NGO plans to disburse field payments in the area. Threat letters were distributed in Herat (Injil) warning against involvement in NGO vocational training projects. In good news, NGO abductees were released after local mediation in Farah and Helmand. Unrest in Badakshan carries a risk of politicizing or preventing NGO activities.

KABUL

In the last reporting period, several NGO have reported approaches by the NDS demanding either lists of both national and international staff or a breakdown of the organisation’s budget. It should be noted that the Ministry of the Economy is the legally mandated government agency responsible for NGO and that any other organisation requesting information on NGO should be instructed to contact the ministry directly. The publication of staff lists poses obvious risks for na-

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tional and international staff alike and should be treated with the utmost seriousness it deserves. Kidnapping remains an increasing threat to Kabul city and the surrounding districts. While there are no distinct geographical concentrations of abductions; in the three months to the end of January there were fourteen attempted or realised reported kidnappings compared to five in the same period the year before. This particular trend is representative of rising crime levels across the city. Local nationals with family members holding influential positions with either the government or private companies have comprised the majority of incidences.



In Kabul, the abduction threat is overwhelmingly criminal in nature, often involving a personal dispute; however there is the potential that AOG may assume a greater role in the number of incidences in the outer laying districts, especially Surobi. It is well know that spotters are present along the arterial roads leading from Kabul. NGO are not immune to the threat and should vary travel times and routes to avoid profiling.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Decreased security in and around city
- IEDs, suicide bombings, rocket attacks
- Abduction

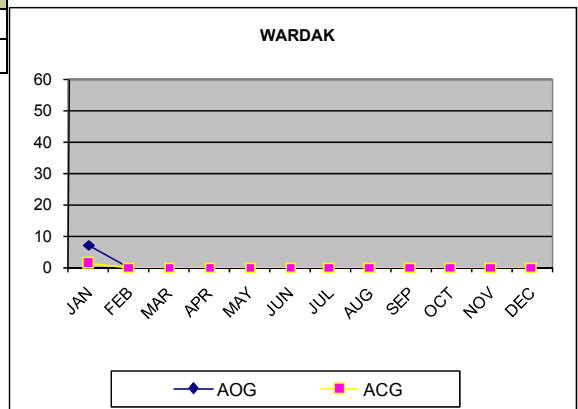
WARDAK

Abductions along the Kabul-Ghazni highway remain a significant threat following reports of a planned abduction of an international staff member along the route to Maydan Shahr. It is recommended that NGO avoid travel to Wardak. Any travel to the province should be low-profile and avoid using habitual routes and timings.

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AOG incidents continue to remain low for the month of January.

The use of Wardak as a transit route to Ghazni and the West present the major current threat from AOG activity. On 15 January two separate attacks were recorded against IMF convoys in Saydabad and Maydan Shahr using an IED and small arms fire respectively.



KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Overall instability and frequent clashes
- Attacks on vehicles traveling the main road
- De-facto AOG control of most areas
- Severe Abduction threat

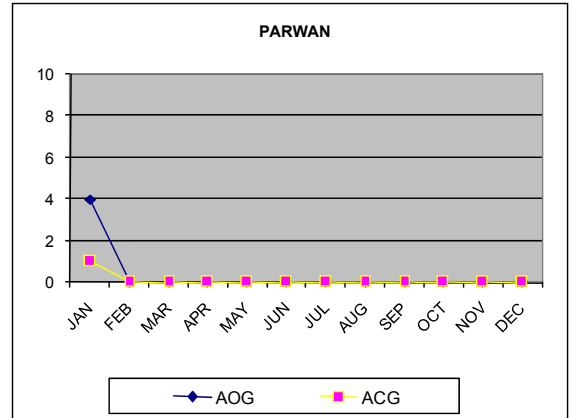
The arrival this month of new US troops in Maydan Shahr as part of the national increase in IMF forces is almost certain to increase the number of IED and ambush attacks on convoys in the province.

PARWAN

A landslide in Salang district claimed the lives of six individuals and more than a dozen others were injured. As a reminder for NGO, any travel plans in winter through mountainous regions renowned for landslide or road closures should be checked in advance with local contacts or col-

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leagues. In addition to the threat from landslides, prolonged delays in isolated regions presents a further danger. Prior planning and adequate provisions in case of delay should be considered a prerequisite when travelling through mountainous areas.



KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- History of IED incidents on road between Chaharikar and Bamyar
- Collateral damage from attacks on security forces
- Demonstrations on main road in Ghorband

IEDs were reported in the districts of Bagram, Shinwari and Ghorband, however no casualties were reported. With Wardak becoming increasingly unstable, the highway route to Herat through Parwan and Bamyar will see an increase in traffic and there is a

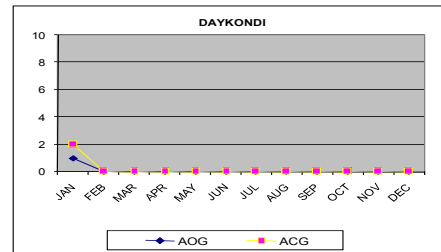
high likelihood that AOG will target the highway through Parwan. This will have the effect of ensuring the last relatively safe arterial road leaving Kabul becomes unpredictable and enhancing the sense of encirclement of the central government.

DAYKONDI

AOG incidences have remained low across the province in January,

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ary, however anecdotal reporting suggests that AOG penetration of the province continues from the south. Although difficult to confirm, especially considering the low number of AOG incidences, the limited government outreach



across the province and the light security presence portends badly for the spring and summer.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Free AOG movement
- Minimum security presence
- Banditry

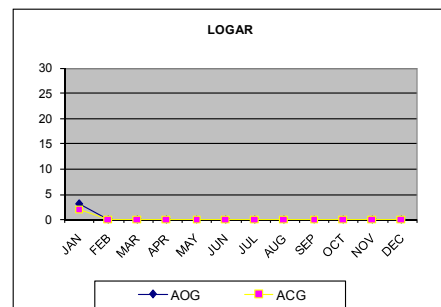
LOGAR

The downward trend in the number of recorded AOG incidences continues in Logar. In the last reporting period the ANP were targeted in two instances. On 16 January an ANP checkpoint in Puli Alam was attacked with

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heavy weapons resulting in no casualties and secondly on 21 January, a policeman travelling in a private vehicle was carjacked and robbed of his possessions.

The ANP, as highly visible elements of the central government, will continue to suffer attacks from AOG, as the lightly armed force remains vulnerable while performing static guard duty at checkpoints and district administration centres.



Logar remains a significant stronghold of AOG activity and similarly to Wardak, the addition of US troops will in all likelihood increase the level of violence in the short to intermediate term. NGO are advised not to travel to Logar as the unpredictable security environment will remain.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG freedom of movement
- Clashes between AOG and security forces
- Abduction

KAPISA

Tagab continued to be the centre of military operations against AOG. On 20 January, IMF launched an air-strike on an AOG hideout, killing a local commander and sixteen others. Following the air-strike a joint ANA/IMF force also arrested seven AOG and

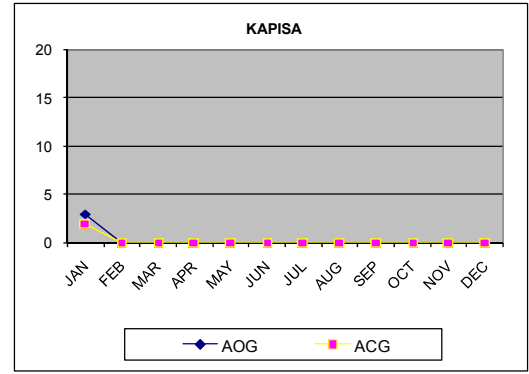
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Overall instability
- Collateral damage from security & AOG clashes
- Significant AOG presence in some districts

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confiscated a cache of weapons. Two days later in Tagab, the ANA engaged AOG forces arresting three men and seizing a number of weapons.

The disputed appointment of a district police commander in Ni-jrab led to a series of protests on 16 and 21 January as several hundred people marched in the street. There were no reports of violence but the issue appears to be unresolved possibly leading to further demonstrations. Kapisa remains an important stronghold for AOG



being located on the border of Kabul. Indeed, in 2008, AOG penetration of the province directly contributed to an increase in AOG activity in the Kabul district of Surobi and could be seen as the reason for intensive AOG/ANA and IMF engagement in the district of Tagab.

BADAKSHAN

Demonstrative of concerns writ large in Afghanistan, fomenting civil unrest and the possibility of a burgeoning armed conflict manifest themselves on 24 January in Yaftali Sufla District. Approximately 800 demonstrators turned out to demand that the GoA address a conflict between Yaftal residents and a notorious AOG Commander. The conflict, initially stemming from the AOG Commander's purported murder of two residents, was recently exasperated when residents sought retribution in the kidnap of the Commander's son. The conflict is further complicated with the residents' disdain for the ANP: ANP freed the son and reportedly refused to detain the said Commander because the GoA, an influential major provincial politi-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

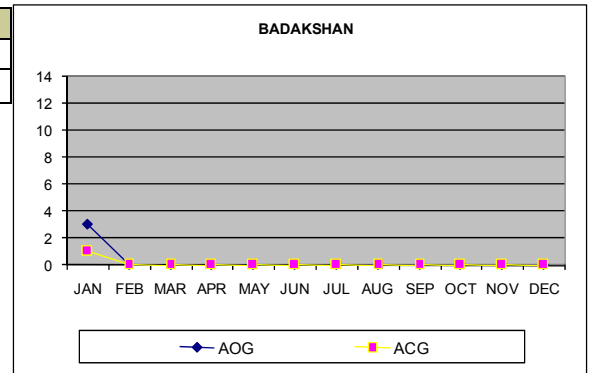
- Food scarcity and resultant violence due to Politicians/Opportunists
- Criminality

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cian, and the ANP desire to co-opt him. Locals also purport that the AOG community and ANSF in the province are conducting narcotics trafficking. Because all parties are disliked, NGO should ensure that an earnest image of neutrality is fostered for NGO activities in Badakshan.

Another incident of concern to NGO was the AOG RPG attack on a GoA health clinic in Argo District on the 24th and typical large demonstrations condemning Israeli military activity in Gaza on 16, 17, and 18 January. Additionally, approximately 350 ANA members that lost their jobs in a DDR program demonstrated in Fayzabad against the GoA concerning unfulfilled land grants on the 20th. NGO should note that AOG activity is said to be occurring in the province through proxies who lent support to the pre-2002 government.

NGO should also heed information on GoA corruption in the



delivery of IO aid from Fayzabad. Credible reporting indicates that a senior member of a committee based in Fayzabad has been prohibiting the movement of aid from the district by emplacing gunmen along routes, refusing exit from the city to the IO's trucks. The official has purportedly insisted that the IO distribute its food aid to residents of Fayzabad only, because he is attempting to bolster his political standing in light of future elections. Reports further that this individual has instigated demonstrations, falsely suggesting that the IO is corrupt, misusing aid, and not coordinating it with the GoA. NGO should consequently realize that political opportunists may also seek to gain control of NGO programming for their own gain.

KUNDUZ

ANSO North was alerted to credible reporting on 21 January that asserts a suicide attack against IMF/ANSF or the international community will occur in Kunduz City. In the past—six occurred in 2008, and seven in 2007—suicide attacks have been focused primarily on IMF/ANSF. And like was experienced in Badakshan Province, approximately 150 former

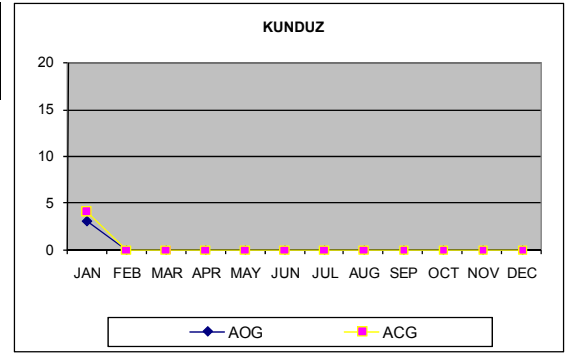
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral from AOG and ANSF/IMF clashes
- Criminality
- Threats against NGO

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ANA members who had lost their jobs in a DDR programme demonstrated over unfulfilled promises of land on 19 January in Kunduz City.

The period was primarily marked, however, by ANP activity: ANP conducted arrests in relation to various murders; detained suspected AOG supporters; and, in Archi District, arrested a suspect ACG element in connection to attacks on private vehicles on the Archi-Kunduz road. Additionally, IMF/ANSF discovered and neutralized a roadside IED and anti-tank mine in Khanabad District



on 25 and 24 January, respectively.

Reported AOG activity was minimal, with two attacks on ANP checkpoints in Kunduz District on the 25th and 26th. NGO should note, however, that AOG activity could become more problematic in Kunduz because of its demographics—approximately 60% are Pash-tun—and the prevalence of armed clans.

JAWZJAN

An apparent ACG operating in Qarqin District stopped a convoy of GoA personnel responsible for development activities as it was transiting through the area on 18 January and robbed the occupants of their cash and belongings. During the robbery, the perpetrators asked the occupants if they were a specific INGO's staff members, and they inquired if the occupants were consequently transporting money to Qarqin district. As mentioned by the perpetrators, the INGO in question had actually planned on transporting money to the district for its development activities. Evidently, the ACG in this incident possessed information on the INGO's intentions

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Political disputes and opportunists
- IED
- Banditry and lack of security

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and sought to specifically target it, likely because the INGO disclosed its intent to distribute funds to recipients within the district. NGO should not disclose intentions to transport money through or to an area whenever possible. Moreover, NGO's should avoid disclosing any movement plans to reduce the likelihood of an ambush occurring.

Jawzjan Province also experienced a spate of IED attacks during this reporting period. On 22 January in Aqcha District, an IED that was reportedly placed in a culvert underneath a bridge detonated in a seeming attempt to damage the culvert and strike a passing ANP vehicle. It appears that a brief gunfight ensued between ANP and the perpetrators as the latter party successfully escaped on a motorbike.

ANP probably thwarted a similar attack when an IED was discovered under a culvert in Khaniqa

District on 20 January and an IMF team neutralized the device. And on 19 January in Mardyan District, an IED constructed of TNT, possibly placed again in a culvert, targeted a bridge in the abovementioned village, damaging the bridge, a school, and a nearby clinic.

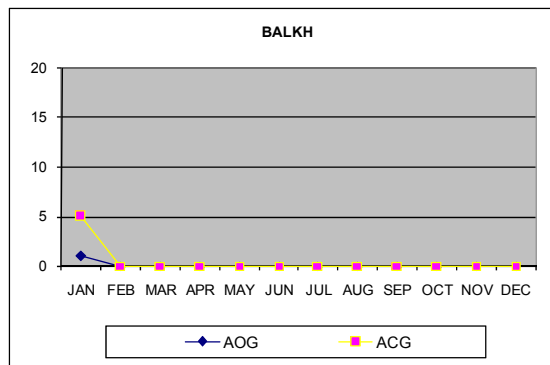
All of the abovementioned incidents are likely resultant from a prominent AOG commander who possesses considerable influence in the province and is disliked by the general populace. Local residents opine that the majority of AOG/ACG activity in the province is due to this personality, a former mujahedin, but the GoA and ANSF/IMF refuse to confront him. Regardless, the actors are most likely conducting these operations for political posturing or monetary compensation, serving as an "outsourced force": external AOG activity in the area would be difficult to facilitate due to the province's demography. NGO should expect to see further AOG/ACG activity in the province and eventual targeting of IMF/ANSF, additionally, because AOG will likely follow typical guerrilla-warfare style methodology of avoiding conventional battle and striking in areas that provide for greater chances of success.

BALKH

A BBIED attacker was reported to have been transported to the Western side of Mazar-i-Sharif City on 25 January with the intent to conduct a suicide attack. The perpetrator is described as follows: a Pashtun, or Pashtun speaking, male; 16-17 yrs old; and wearing black traditional Afghan clothing and a small traditional white hat. While the ultimate source of this information is not vetted, the source asserted that he

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caught a glimpse of the purported perpetrator’s BBIED vest. Although many NGO and other actors are concerned about this threat—a very atypical threat for Mazar-i-Sharif—and looking for how best to address it, NGO security procedures should inherently recommend steps, such as avoiding being in the presence of known parties to the conflict and maintaining a low profile, to prevent being targeted even when a threat is unknown. Other than the above incident, the province experienced typical ACG and possible AOG logistical activity. Hence, ANP primarily conducted counternarcotics operations and



multiple weapon and ammunition seizures. Important to note, stockpiling and caching of ammunition which appeared during this reporting period could be indicative of AOG desires to conduct operations in the province or utilization of the area as a logistical hub. Conversely, it is possible that local prominent political personalities were staging them for later use against opposing factions or for use in ACG endeavours.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

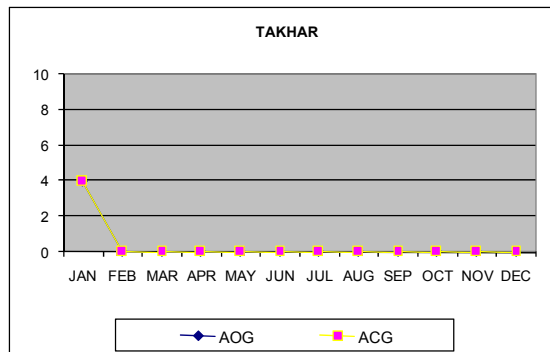
- Criminality
- AOG latent support in western districts
- Suicide threat

TAKHAR

Current trends in Takhar Province indicate that AOG activity will escalate because of ongoing, publicised IMF/ANSF operations in Kunduz province and future IMF/ANSF operations that will inevitably catalyse AOG and ACG migration. An example of how increased instability will affect NGO came in the late night of 23 January when 2 RPGs were fired at an INGO compound in Taluqan City. As is typical of non-armour piercing RPG attacks on a structure, no casualties and minimal damage was incurred. Information suggests that AOG may have been seen close to Taluqan City in the villages of Kunchi and

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Dosat prior to the event. While a motive for the attack remains unknown, speculation centres on the possibility that it was a focused AOG attack meant to effect a political change in the said INGO’s home government’s policies and activities in Afghanistan. Regardless, NGO should prepare for an increase in hostilities and take appropriate steps that include the following: emphasizing communal acceptance; upgrades in security barriers; installation of blast film for windows; conducting emergency response drills; refresher training in trauma first-aid; and ensuring that patterns are not established in movement or schedules. Another significant incident occurred on 19 January when ANP encountered AOG that were at-



tempting to plant landmines on the Taluqan-Kunduz Highway in Taluqan District. After a brief exchange of fire with the ANP, the AOG retreated and abandoned nine anti-tank mines, fuses, and batteries. Similarly, after ANP were engaged by AOG in the Aqmasjed area of Taluqan District on 17 January, ANP also discovered IED materials that were left in the wake of the attack.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Banditry
- Increased AOG activity

BAGHLAN

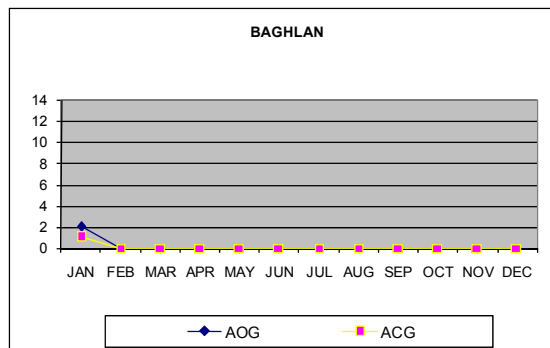
As of 27 January, an unspecified amount of suicide bombers were said to be currently active in the province, suggesting that the bombers may intend to employ BBIED and VBIED against both IMF and GoA installations or personalities. While no exact district was indicated, the threat was said to be higher in Puli Khumri and Baghlani Jadid.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- AOG activity in Baghlani Jadid and Puli Hisar

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This threat may have aptly materialised as a result of investigations into the 21 January BBIED attack in Baghlani Jadid District, where a bomber detonated his explosive vest in an apparent attempt to kill the said district’s ANP Chief. As a result, the BBIED attacker was killed and seven others, including the said ANP Chief and civilians, were reportedly injured. ANP arrested two suspects in connection to the incident. Because there has not been an incident in the said district since 1 July 2008, the tar-



getting of the ANP Chief suggests that his efforts to address AOG activity may have been too effective. NGO should expect to see further erosion of the security situation in Baghlani province in the upcoming months and an increase in complex attacks.

KUNAR

This reporting period has included several significant incidents as the conflict in Kunar intensifies, with NGO being directly affected in events which demonstrate how the current level of insecurity provides a permissive environment for many with malicious intent. In the village of Bar Kanday on the night of 17 January between 20-30 armed men attacked a NGO clinic. Having gained access to the clinic the armed group set about what appears to have been their only objective, the abduction of a specific member of the clinic’s staff. Within 3 days ANP had arrested several people and after a short mediation process the staff member was released. Further south, a NGO operated clinic in the district centre of Chawkay received a direct threat

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- AOG-IM/ANA clashes
- DAC attacks

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in the form of a night letter posted on its walls during the night of 20-21 January. Claiming to be from a major AOG, the letter made allegations against some of those employed at the clinic, demanding that unless their working practices changed they would be considered non-Muslims and killed. Reports were also received that one of several AOG that has moved into Kunar in recent weeks has been tasked with attacking NGO facilities and had identified a female worker at a NGO clinic in the district of Khas Kunar as a potential target.

As in the first part of January, AOG across Kunar are not limiting their actions to attacks on security force’s fixed locations. While attacks on military and ANP bases in Mano Gai and Chawkay have continued, elsewhere in the province checkpoints and patrols have also been engaged by AOG in short duration attacks. Several other incidents

involved indirect fire as rockets were fired at, and missed, static targets in Sirkanay, Asadabad and Mano Gai. As well as the abduction of the clinic member of staff outlined above, similar reported incidents also saw a taxi driver and an ANP officer and his family abducted in two separate incidents elsewhere in the province. An indication of the intensity that the conflict in Kunar can reach was provided close to the village of Bar Kanday on the afternoon of 17 January when AOG and IM forces were engaged over a period of several hours and an IM helicopter was forced to make an emergency landing after being hit by RPG fire.

In the north of Kunar several reported incidents in Chapa Dara reinforce the impression that AOG have increasing freedom to act in the district, with several instances of AOG conducting their own vehicle checkpoints, and the abandonment of a police checkpoint in the DAC by several officers who didn’t receive their salaries. There are also reports that an AOG succeeded in motivating a large part of the population of a village in the district, who then surrounded nearby ANP checkpoints and conducted their own checks of passing traffic. The concern caused by these events is added to when they are considered alongside recent AOG activity in neighbouring Nuristan.

NURISTAN

Reports of HiG and Taliban co-operation in the southern districts of Wama and Waygal were given added veracity by media reports indicating that AOG had declared an Islamic Emirate in an area crossing the provincial border into Kunar’s Chapa Dara.

On the 19 January, a week prior to the publicised declaration of the Emirate, a marked vehicle belonging to a NNGO affiliated to an INGO was stopped by armed men close to the village of

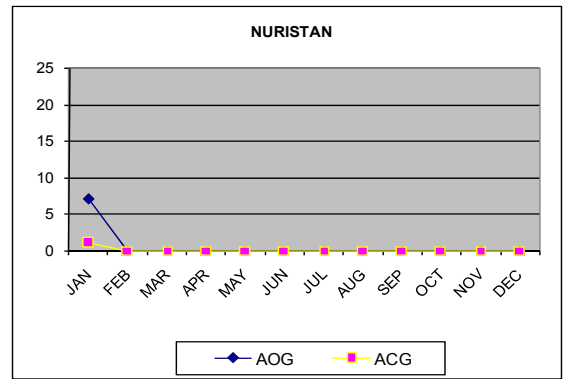
	NGO Incidents
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Alanzi in southern Wama.

The vehicle’s driver and two passengers, all employees of the NGO, were then taken against their will by the armed group.

By early evening however, intensive mediation through local networks saw all three released unharmed. Indications are that the NGO was not targeted deliberately but that the armed group, which operates with the consent of AOG if it is not directly as part of the prevalent group, considered the vehicle and passengers an opportunistic target.

Elsewhere in the province AOG continued to attack an IM base in Kamdesh on a frequent basis, di-



recting limited harassing fire at the location in the village of Kamo three times in the second part of January. Reports of AOG movement into Kamdesh and Wama indicate an AOG intent to consolidate their hold on much of Nuristan and intensify the conflict as the province emerges from winter.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

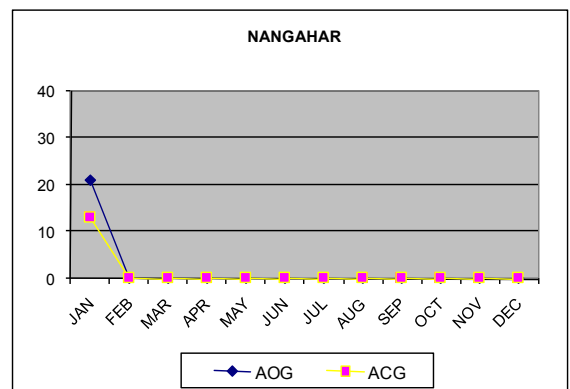
- Abduction
- AOG prevalence and limited GoA remit

NANGAHAR

Trends described in the report for the preceding period have continued and developed into the second half of January. The current ready availability of IED materials in the province was evidenced by the use of a small but effective IED left against the front gate of an INGO office in Jalalabad City on the evening of 29 January. The detonation damaged a substantial metal gate and shattered several windows. The absence of casualties was fortuitous and the incident could have resulted in serious injury to staff or passers-by if it had taken place at another time.

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Despite the use of such a device against a NGO the incident is at this time not believed to be directly linked to AOG activity, which has involved more substantial devices directly targeting security forces across the province. The preceding period saw AOG attempt, and largely fail, to use IED against security forces on at least ten occasions. In this period a number of devices have been found and made safe, but several have also detonated against targets causing casualties. In Chaparhar on 17 January a suicide bomber drove his SVBIED into a ANP patrol. The bomber was the only fatality but three ANP officers and a child were injured by the blast. East of Jalalabad a RCIED was used against an ANP patrol without causing any casualties, and in Chaparhar on 26 January another



RCIED was used against an IMF patrol, causing no IM casualties but killing three people who had been travelling along the road in the opposite direction to the patrol. The DAC in Pachir Wa Agam was attacked with RPG fire twice in this reporting period, and a sustained attack on a company laying fibre optic cable between Jalalabad and Kabul took place in Hisarak on the 29 January. Nangarhar’s southern districts are often cited as being increasingly under the control of AOG but reports indicating the involvement of members of the public in apprehending AOG involved in the Hisarak attack show that many areas are still contested.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

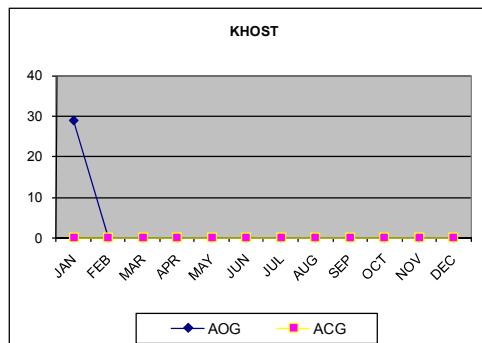
- IED on main routes
- SV/BBIED attacks on security force patrols
- Crime in Jalalabad city

KHOST

The 19 January in Khost City saw a number of IED incidents, culminating in a failed complex attack against an IM base east of the City. An IED detonation at a busy traffic junction early in the morning injured a traffic police officer and elsewhere in the city a device detonated outside the house of an ANP officer without causing any casualties. At lunchtime the main gate of the IM base at the City's old airport was attacked by a suicide bomber driving a SVBIED. This initial attack was quickly followed up by a solitary bomber

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wearing a BBIED. Reports are still not clear but it is understood that, apart from the dead AOG members, casualties from these attempts to breach the gate were limited to a single dead passer-by and several other injured members of the public. In the follow up operation a further large SVBIED was found and driver detained despite his attempts to kill himself. In Tere Zayi and Sabari IED were used against ANA patrols, causing injuries to patrol members on both occasions. The DAC in Sabari, Bak and Gurbuz were all attacked by AOG during this reporting period. Outside Khost City, AOG activity has been concentrated in Sabari District. Apart from two attacks on the DAC, security forces found



two IED, one of which, in the village of Khulbesat, killed two ANP officers who were attempting to make it safe. The premature detonation of another IED in Khulbesat a few days prior to this is further evidence of the hazards facing those using the routes north of Khost City. The beheading of two people in the Sabari village of Zamber reinforces the impression that the district is a centre of AOG activity. It is reasonable to assume that AOG in Khost still have the capacity and intent to use more suicide devices against IM and GOA forces and locations over the coming weeks. As the effects of winter recede activity levels will only increase.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

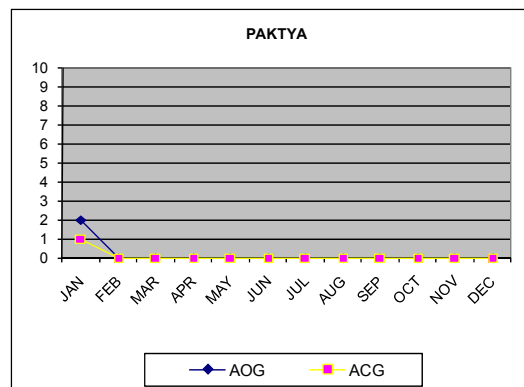
- SV/BBIED attacks on security forces and GOA
- Attacks on DAC
- IED on roads to DAC

PAKTYA

An IED found on the Khost-Gardez road on 19 January is an indication of a gradual increase in AOG activity in the province as the weather gets milder towards the end of winter. AOG last targeted traffic on the road in early November 2008. In the central district of Lija Mangal a construction company vehicle was dam-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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aged when an IED detonated on 22 January, and was the first AOG initiated incident in the area since October 2008. The final and most significant reported incident in Paktya during this reporting period however occurred in Chamkanay DAC on 24 January when a BBIED was used against a border patrol in the town's busy bus station. As well as killing one member of the patrol, two more were injured along with at least eight members of the public who were nearby. If AOG are able to gain access to munitions in the



coming weeks it is likely that these early indicators of AOG intent will soon be followed by other incidents similar to those seen before winter set in, namely a significant use of indirect fire against IM locations in Zurmat as well as IED being employed on the route north from Shamal.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED on main routes
- Abduction
- Collateral damage from indirect fire

LAGHMAN

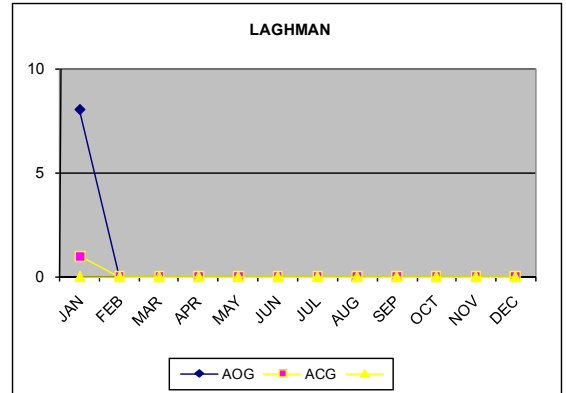
This reporting period has been dominated by the IM action in the village of Guloch in the early hours of 24 January. Conflicting reports indicate a varying number of civilian fatalities with IM sources stating that the operation was a successful attack on AOG. Taking place little more than two weeks after what has now become

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another contentious IM operation elsewhere in Laghman, demonstrations against IMF took place in the provincial capital, Mehtarlam, and concluded peacefully with petitions being handed in at the Governor's office. Unlike the earlier IM operation, this incident has quickly drawn criticism from local government. There is though no evidence yet of any resentment of IMF being translated into hostility towards others in the international community, including INGO.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG presence on Rte 1 in Qarghayi
- IED on routes through Alishing and Alingar Valleys



In the southern district of Qarghayi, AOG attacked a police checkpoint and patrol in two separate incidents, while an overturned IM supply truck was looted and burned within hours of its accident.

KANDAHAR

As of 21 January, an AOG was reportedly planning to kidnap a U.S. citizen that appears to be based at the Kandahar Airport. The purported targeted was described as follows: a possible construction worker that departs the airport each morning around 10:00 hrs and transits to an office next to Shorana Hill, returning to the airport at 1300 hrs; and the target usually dresses in local attire and drives either a Toyota Corolla or 4-Runner. While the target is described as American, it is possible that s/he may merely be perceived or assumed to be American. With the detailed information of the target's activities, it is likely that the target has established exploitable patterns, allowing perpetrators to assault her/him from a location at a set time and probably

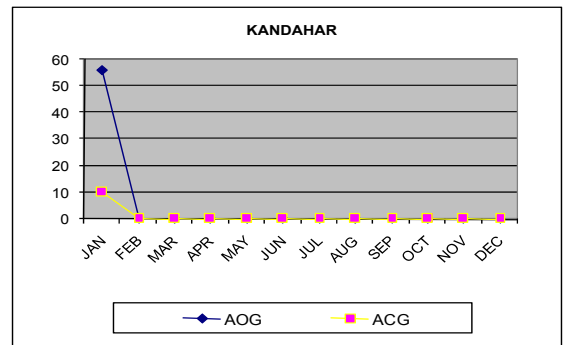
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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after s/he has exited a building. While it is possible that the target has been under surveillance, it is more likely that bystanders or associates that want to exploit the target for a ransom or murder merely happened to observe or obtain information on the pattern the target is demonstrating and have communicated the information to an AOG. This threat serves as an example of how best to avoid becoming a target: regardless of one's ability to detect surveillance, varying routes and times greatly reduces the likelihood of an ACG/AOG targeting you, because of the risk an ACG/AOG takes to act without a set location or time window; the longer an ACG/AOG must wait at a set location to launch an attack or pursue a target, the greater the probability of discovery.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Abduction
- Voter/Election intimidation

NGOs should also heed the 16 January discovery of an apparent AOG cell in District 9 of Kandahar City. ANP discovered 3 mis-



siles, 4 ANA uniforms, and 30 books that were against the GoA at a house after they responded to an explosion, which originated from a fourth missile that prematurely detonated. Consequently, IMF/ANSF attempts to secure the city from infiltrating IEDs and AOGs are inadequate, because AOGs are operating within the city limits, probably with the intent to strike GoA and IMF/ANSF targets. Additionally, multiple AOG attacks on 20 and 21 January in Districts 4, 5, and 6 of Kandahar City are indicative of a likely uptick in violence due to the commencement of the voter registration process in the province. It is apparent, irrespective of the motivation, that NGO should expect the upcoming months to be even more climactic in the Southern Region, with the ability of the GoA and employees of foreign entities to work in the province becoming extremely curtailed. Additionally, the threat to expatriate staff is deemed critical.

HELMAND

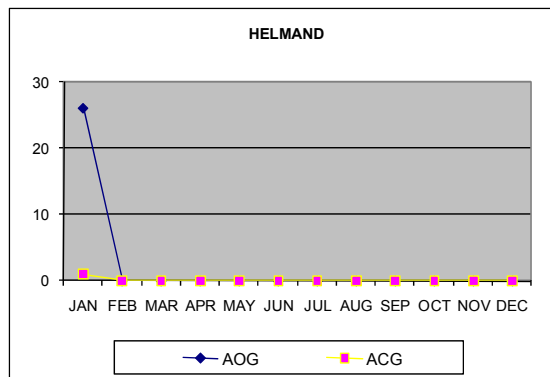
Instability continues to reign in Helmand Province. ANSO received information on 21 January that AOG were intent on attacking an INGO in Helmand Province, Garmser District, Yasin Zay Kolay area, with a specific female expatriate as a target. Although ANSO does not know the veracity of this information, NGO should treat the threat as credible. With such a pointed threat, depending on how the information was relayed, it is conversely possible that it was meant to influence the said INGO's activities. NGO in the region should vary movements and schedules and consider utilizing security gates and other security barriers at all hours of the day due to increased threats in the Southern Region. When utilizing security gates, it is usually best for only staff that are within the protected space to maintain a key, reducing the likelihood of staff outside of the protected zone from opening the gate under duress. Depending on the surround-

	NGO Incidents
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ing circumstances, relocation of the affected target is usually the safest option.

On 22 January in Nahri Sarraj District, AOG members diverted 2 local trucks that were transporting IO aid to Dilaram District, Nimroz Province. ANA escorting the convoy responded and liberated the high jacked trucks after a 30 minute clash. And an AOG member who was in Lashkar Gah prison for 3 months gained his release on 20 January, and he is now working as a GoA employee. He is said to have been planning to engineer his escape from prison with the assistance of 500 other inmates and 100 AOG members outside. Consequently, locals will likely perceive his release and attempt to co-opt him as a sign of weakness and apparent local endorsement of AOG, further eroding confidence in the GoA.

In furtherance of the belief that AOG are now starting to rely more on suicide attacks, peripheral reporting suggests AOG intend to conduct a BBIED attack against IMF/ANP convoys in



Musa Qala; however, there has not been a suicide attack in Helmand since this same reporting period in 2008, and suicide attacks are usually only utilized as a last resort when the operating environment or target does not allow conventional, guerrilla-style attacks. Additionally, a 25 January report asserted that AOG have infiltrated into Nawa-i-Barak Zayi District with the intent to abduct GoA employees, assault voter registration centres, and emplace roadside IEDs.

Development programming in Helmand Province is only recommended in GoA areas of control—Garmser, Nawa, Nad Ali, Kajaki, Sangin, and Nahri Sarraj—because of local AOG activity. NGO should especially avoid Baghran, Washer, Khanashin, Dishu, and Naw Zad districts (Naw Zad does have an IMF presence). If NGO wish to work outside of GoA administered areas, however, NGO are advised to obtain AOG permission before approaching stakeholders. Apparently, AOG will approach local stakeholders and discuss the entailed programmes and will relay acceptance or dissent.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Abduction
- Active Conflict

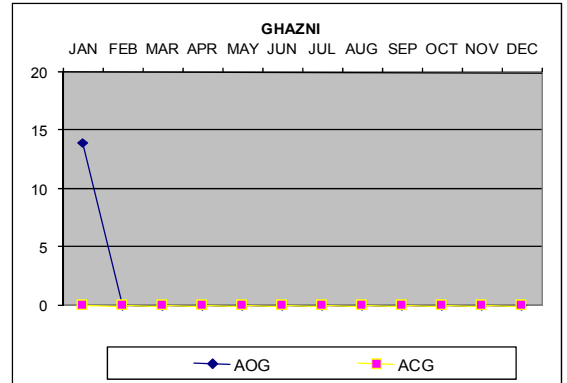
This report is a summary of the best available information. If you can help us improve it by providing written context or incident information from you area, or if you would like to volunteer to contribute a regular Provincial Section, please contact your nearest ANSO regional office. Thank you.

GHAZNI

On 16 January, indicating a limited GoA attempt to address concerns of corruption and malfeasance in the ANP, ANP from a unit responsible for internal affairs issues detained 16 ANP in Qarabagh District who were accused of robbery. And on 18 January, in Zana Khan District, a white Toyota Corolla and a grey Toyota taxi laden with explosives were reported as being prepared for an attack that will be carried out in Kabul city, entering Kabul city via the following districts: Baraki Barak, Charkh and Tangi

	NGO Incidents
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Wardak. NGO are active in the province except for in the Southern and Western areas, and residents predominately welcome them and their programmes; some residents, however, assert that NGO are only financially motivated and ignoring the need to ensure that NGO projects are appropriate and fruitful. Additionally, residents opine that NGO internal corruption has tarnished the reputation of NGO and is thus hindering communal acceptance of NGO, a hindrance that jeopardizes NGO security. Appropriately, NGO may wish to ensure that transparency, ownership, and accountability are stressed in stakeholder workshops and an image of an earnest desire to provide



KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from IED or convoy ambushes
- Abduction
- Rocket/RPG attacks

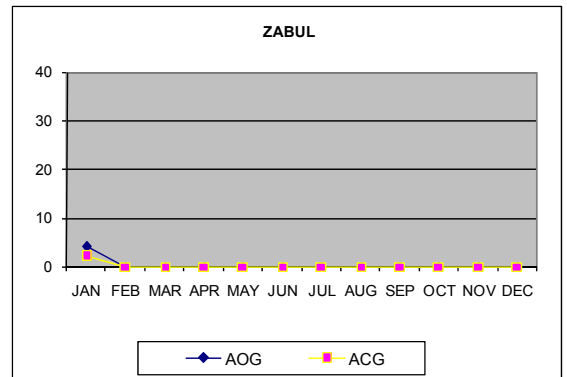
stakeholders with benefits is promulgated. And although reporting does not indicate it—possibly due to the lack of information flow—locals claim that AOG continue to search main roads for GoA employees, a threat that NGO and National Solidarity Programme participants should keep in mind. Moreover, locals assert that there is malfeasance in the ANP, with the ANP discretely partaking in local activities that are attributed to ACG and AOG.

ZABUL

Compiled reporting suggests that IMF and ANSF are the dominate actors in the province during this reporting period, with IMF targeting and killing negligible AOG numbers in two incidents on 21 January and one on 19 January. Criminality is also present, demonstrated in the 18 January abduction in Tarnak Wa Jaldak. In this incident, the perpetrators abducted an employee of the Haj Auqaaf Department and are currently demanding 1,000,000 Afs from his family for his release.

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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Despite IMF's seeming monopoly of violence in Zabul, NGO should recognize that AOG are active and demanding material support, such as food, from the local populace. Zabul residents will confide that they dislike AOG; however, because there is no protection from AOG retribution, they cannot provide manifest opposition to AOG policies or activities. Zabul residents are likewise displeased with IMF, apparently because IMF are unable—or lack a desire—to curtail civilian casualties or coordinate with ANSF. In response to local ire, the Zabul Provincial Council closed for a week in protest to these purported casualties.



KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Collateral damage from AOG and IMF clashes
- Banditry/Hijacking

Local ANA and ANP are in good standing with locals; however, the lack of resources and manpower and IMF support is resulting in instability. The ANA has a presence in every district and locals believe that it effectively controls the Kabul-Kandahar Highway in collaboration with ANP. And on governance matters, locals opine that the GoA is largely ineffective and suggest that they will be inclined to support AOG if this does not improve.

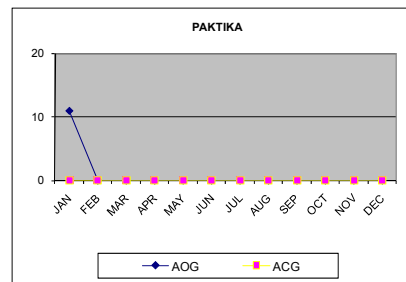
PAKTIKA

Khair Kot District was the setting for a 600 strong organized demonstration on 22 January in response to the ANA’s delay in paying a local construction company that had been working on an ANA base for the past 4 months. Even though the demonstration ended peacefully after the District Governor intervened and promised to solve the demonstrators’ grievances within the coming two days, participants asserted that if

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

the problem was not solved in this time frame, they would demonstrate in the centre of Paktika. And in a possible AOG attempt to demonstrate that they will punish “moral offenders”, an IED that was placed by unknown suspects inside a music shop in Chamkanay District exploded, destroying the shop on 17 January.

Perceptions of NGO in the province are positive; nonetheless, locals express frustration towards the lack of projects, with the majority of programming being focused in the central region of the province. While this is probably a



result of the prevalent security vacuum in the province, locals believe it is due to a lack of available funding.

The rampant closure of schools, GoA corruption, and the perceived inability of the GoA to prevent AOG and ACG activity are also fostering local discontent. Additionally, the perceived lack of IMF coordination with ANSF, as well as the unfulfilled desire for IMF to provide security for reconstruction and to secure provincial highways, contributes to locals’ dissatisfaction.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Collateral damages from IMF/AOG clashes

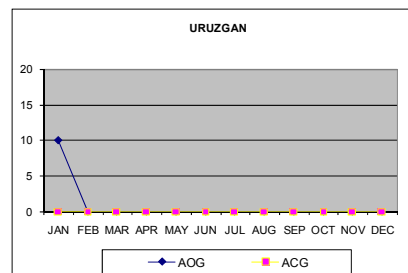
URUZGAN

The situation in Uruzgan has been relatively calm and did not change during the reporting period. The threat to NGOs remains because there are indications that NGO activities are not accepted by AOG. In particular this is the case in the Char Chino, Gizab and Khas Uruzgan areas. Here the presence of IMF, ANA and ANP

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

is very limited or absent and AOG have a great freedom of movement. Due to CF operations in the BALUCHI valley the risk for NGOs in the area is downgraded from HIGH to MEDIUM-HIGH.

The greatest risks for NGOs are IEDs in nearly all areas. In the Char Chino area many roads are mined. The threat of IEDs is likely to be the lowest in the towns of Tarin Kowt, Chora (Ali Shirzai) and Deh Rawod. Foreign staff remains a particularly inter-



esting target for kidnapping to both AOG and criminals which will use this method in an attempt to raise funds. This has happened in other districts.

The following areas are assessed as not permissive: Char Chino, Gizab, Khas Uruzgan, Kamisan, Khush Khadir, Eastern Mirabad/Chenartu. A great risk is involved when traveling by road in the areas indicated. Kidnapping is an increasing risk.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Minimal IMF/ANA/ANP
- AOG freedom of movement
- IED’s

NIMROZ

During this reporting period, three victims from the 2 January abduction of GoA, IO and NGO employees who were in Kang District, Nimroz Province, were released. Amongst them, two were NGO employees and the third was from the affected IO. ANSO records

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

indicate that 2 GoA employees remain in AOG custody. In Chakhansur District, ANSF clashed with AOG, resulting in seven AOG killed and fifteen AOG and one ANP wounded on 26 January. Additionally, on 20 January in

Chahar Burjak District, AOG assaulted an ANBP post, initiating a two hours firefight that resulted in six AOG killed and four AOG and one ANBP wounded.

While incident levels are low in Nimroz, NGO should not be deceived: reporting is extremely lacking, and locals purport that AOG are active in every district and in city centres, where the GoA is usually stronger.

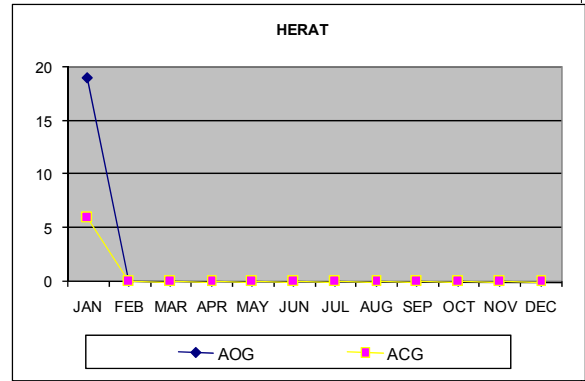
HERAT

Herat played host to a number of major security incidents during this period of reporting. The developments during the past fortnight point to enhanced AOG activity in Herat as a whole; both in the serious nature of the incidents and also in the scope of their coverage. Around mid Jan, AOG issued a letter to the elders and Imams in the villages of Gozara district. Among other conditions were the requirements for NGO to close down vocational and other training courses being run for beneficiaries and also for the criminals to cease their activities or face severe reprisals. The issuing of the threats exhibit a hardening of AOG stance while also towing of an ideology aimed at opposing efforts at normalization and development. Reports

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
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indicate that off late AOG have been making good their threats made against individuals involved in criminal activities. These developments point to the AOG resolve to implement their stipulations in a premeditated fashion. While areas in Gozara and Injil remain under the strong sway of AOG, incidents in these areas exhibit attempts by AOG at population influence and control – and also impact adversely on NGO operations and functioning. It remains a matter of inference as to when AOG would target NGO activities as their next agenda.

In another serious occurrence, seven employees of a private construction company employed on a construction project in Torghundi area of Kushk District were kidnapped by AOG in a well executed operation. The setting afire of the construction equipment by AOG was possibly an attempt to send across a message indicating their hostility to the construction/



development projects being undertaken in the area. In the larger context the incidents in Kushk are bound to have a dampener effect on the development projects in the area.

A vehicle borne suicide attack was carried out by AOG on an ANA vehicle on Herat Kandhar Ring Road in Gozara District causing two fatal and three wounded casualties. The assassination by AOG of a tribal leader in Zamana-bad village of Pashtun Zargun district - the next very day of his meeting with the governor, indicates the level of political gains at stake for rival AOG in the district of Pashtun Zargun. This incident and other armed clashes between AOG in Injil, points to the turf war being fought in civilian inhabited areas - which is expected to worsen with the approach of the elections.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG Intimidation
- AOG Kidnappings
- SBVIED Attacks

GHOR

During the last fortnight, Ghor maintained a relatively safe environment when compared to the rest of the Western region. The lack of reporting on crime and the absence of AOG activities allow it to be a comparatively safer area for NGO operations. However the situation may never be taken for granted considering that Ghor provides the conduit to AOG

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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movements/ migrations from the southern provinces of Farah and Helmand to the northern one in Badghis. The districts of Teywara and Sharak can suddenly prove to be dangerous territory with the establishing of AOG check points and armed robberies occurring overnight.

The seizure of a huge cache of ammunition in Lal Wa Sarjangal is a remainder of the lethal amount of ordinance existing in the province and the potential for it to be used in times of conflict with deadly

consequences against combatants and non-combatants alike. The surrender of an assortment of weapons in Cheghcharan to the DIAG programme is a marker to the continuing success of the programme in removing the potential for further conflict and violence in a much beleaguered society.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- UXO & Mines
- Criminality

FARAH

The incident of abduction and subsequent release of a NGO by an AOG - post conduct of successful negotiations by community elders in Khakhi Safed district on 24 Jan - points to the risks to NGO functioning; inherent to the province as a whole. Because of the nature of their work and the accompanied vulnerabilities, NGO face the hazard of being kidnapped more often than their counterparts from other professions. Not only do they present a soft target to the abductors, it is also the lure of a sizeable ransom, or that of gaining quick publicity for AOG agenda, which makes them a preferred quarry. The subsequent

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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intervention by community elders and using of the leverage of tribal ties in this episode was greatly instrumental in securing their release. The relevant point - of advantages accrued from gaining beneficiary acceptance for NGO projects and the resultant goodwill generated - may not be lost here. Tracking of movement and ensuring an alternative means of communication can help speed up rescue attempts and reduce the possibility of being lost without a trace in such cases.

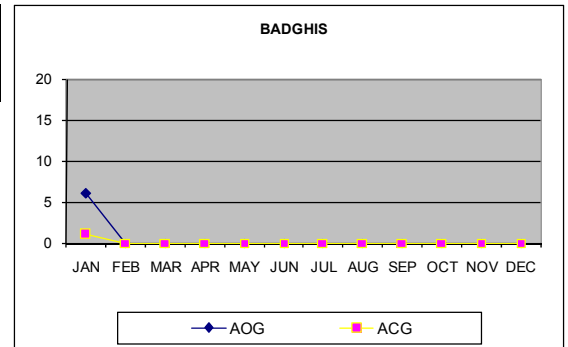
The many incidents of IED strikes in Bala Buluk and Gulistan

districts on security forces and civilians alike, indicates the extent to which this tactic is being used by AOG to a great effect as a force multiplier to inflict casualties. The relative ease with which the device can be made to function, coupled with its insidious nature, instils an ever pervading fear in the minds of people. Ensuring effective intimidation of the populace also makes it amenable to the control of the non-state actors. The killing of two bike riders in Bala Buluk in an IED strike is a grim reminder to the perils being faced by all road users in the province. The other two incidents of IED strikes on IMF and ANA - causing three fatal and eleven wounded casualties - indicates the extensive employment of these devices by AOG. It also points to the widespread military operations being undertaken by security forces in these two districts. The overall environment presents many dangers to the NGO functioning in the province – especially in the form of the risks of being caught up in the conflict.

BADGHIS

During the last week of Jan events in Badghis suddenly seemed to spin out of control. The killing by AOG of a prominent member of the Aimoq community in Muqor district on 24 Jan night (accused of according support to government initiatives) spiralled into a full fledged armed conflict as armed villagers countered the assailants both within the village and in Muqor district while the AOG and ANP fought pitched battles causing many AOG and civilian casualties. The action also galvanised the affected community in taking to arms, especially in the districts of Muqor and Qadis - besides also mobilizing nearly 300 fighters. This unexpected threat development catalyzed minority

community members in Muqor to flee their villages and take refuge in the mountains against possible revenge attacks. The governor of Badghis despatched a special emissary to Qala e Now to spearhead negotiations - as the issue assumed ethnic overtones and threatened to flare up into a full scale ethnic conflict affecting the districts of Muqor and Qadis and Qala e Now City. There have been reports of Qala e Naw witnessing a siege like situation in the preceding week and opportunity ambushes or mobile check points set up by rival factions in Murghab and Qadis to establish identity of transients. The presence of two major communities in the neighbouring districts of Muqor and Qadis increases the possibility of the strife flaring up in areas not affected earlier. The issue is further compounded by the lack of a sufficient number of security forces in the area. All this -



added to the prevailing confusion and the brewing ethnic animosity - creates ample chance for NGO being caught up in the conflict.

There are reports of an AOG check point being established at Darzak on the Road Kushk-Torghundy. AOG have been reported to be forcing vehicles to stop and carrying out checks to establish identity of transients traveling on the road. In a separate incident three employees of a government donor agency were waylaid by armed robbers in Ab Kamari district and relieved of all valuables. Though security incidents initiated by AOG are regularly reported from Ab Kamari district, this instance seems to be the handiwork of an ACG. Considering the thin presence of ANSF in most of Badghis, travel on less frequented or lateral roads at late hours increases the probability of being subjected to such attacks.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Ethnic Conflict
- AOG Check Points
- Armed Robberies along road Herat-Qala e Now



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Deutsche Welthungerhilfe

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

ANSO ACRONYMS

IMF-International Military Forces / AOG-Armed Opposition Groups / GOA-Government of Afghanistan / ACG-Armed Criminal Groups / ANA-Afghan National Army / ANP-Afghan National Police / IED-Improvised Exploding Device / AEF-Afghan Eradication Forces / RPG-Rocket Propelled Grenade / IDF-Indirect Fire (ex: mortars) / VBIED-Vehicle Borne Improvised Exploding Device / PRP-Previous Reporting Period / ANBP-Afghan National Border Police / SAF-Small Arms Fire / NDS-National Directorate of Security (intelligence) / PSC-Private Security Company / DC-District Centre

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MISSING

This report ANSO could not provide analysis for the provinces of:

- Bamiyan
- Panjshir
- Farayab
- Samangan
- Sari-Pul

This is because we do not know enough about the area to comment on the significance of the incidents occurring there.

If you can help us understand the province better please contact us.

Monthly Incidents against NGO's (by perpetrator)

