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THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- AOG attempts to hinder or control NGO operations
- Impending ‘developmental push’ by IMF sponsorship
- Conspiracies of IMF collusion with Taliban in the north
- Political discord

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COUNTRY SUMMARY

While October’s conflict levels will likely be significantly lower than Augusts’ all time record, dynamics ranging from increased AOG attempts to establish tacit rule over NGO freedom of movement to ire over increased IMF intrusion into previously isolated areas foreshadow a likely decline in the humanitarian space.

The hope of ameliorating ill-perceived notions that NGOs are linked with IMF, the GoA, and foreign interests looks even more dim with murmurs of an impending ‘developmental push’ by at least one foreign government, meaning emphasis will likely be placed on PRT programmes which evidently erode perceptions of NGO neutrality.

Public suspicion of foreign conspiracies also will affect NGO acceptance because of rumours and GoA innuendoes that suggest IMF are lending covert support to Taliban in the Northern Region.

Political discord is also a threat to NGOs, especially in areas that have historically suffered from ethno-political tensions.

Flash points in the Northern and Western regions persistently draw attention to AOG desires to use ethnic and political rivalries to establish pockets of resistance.

While all of the abovementioned factors do not paint a good picture, NGO dedication to addressing them is promising.

During this period, we saw that AOG challenges to NGO neutrality and safety are diffuse and often erratic, but they can be addressed through fruitful and deliberate negotiations (see Balkh). And understanding the context, as in Kapisa, can ensure NGO acceptance.

With this, further blurring of the lines between IMF and NGOs will require, at a minimum, further delineation and physical separation between NGOs, for-profit development agencies, and PRTs. Moreover, if one recognises that there evidently is no room for civil-military operations in a state where one of the actors—the military—is a combatant, then can we hope for progress.

NGO DATA & TRENDS

A spate of NGO incidents came to the fore during the period, occurring in the Northern, Central, and Western regions. Again, the severity of the incidents, incident type, and actors were quite diffuse, including an IED strike, banditry, armed confrontation, arson, threats, and abduction.

Of note, in the north we witnessed direct AOG threats to an NGO operating in Balkh and the NGO’s well-orchestrated negotiation, through the aid of a humanitarian actor, with the party involved—negotiations that later led the overall AOG umbrella in the region to seek recognition and further negotiations on the affected NGO’s operations elsewhere in the north.

Another significant and atypical NGO incident occurred in the north, this time in Samangan, when armed actors kidnapped an entire NGO clinic’s staff with the desire to conduct a prisoner exchange and receive a ransom. (ANSF secured their release).

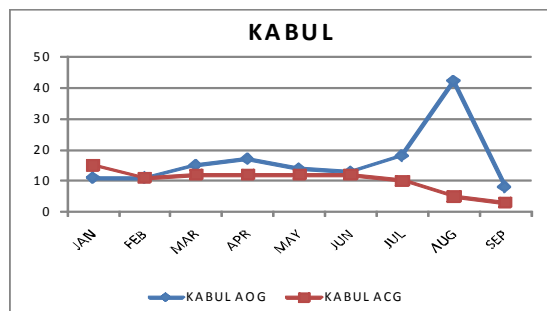
KABUL

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	1

On October 11, an NGO vehicle travelling along the district road to the DAC in Khaki Jabbar was struck by an IED. The vehicle was unmarked, and previously that morning, an IMF as well as two ANP convoys had passed the same location without incident. The device detonated, however, only partially exploding, pushing the NGO vehicle into the air but causing no injuries or damage to the vehicle. Subsequent investigations have been unable to determine who the target of the IED was. The NGO only occasionally visits the implementation area and it seems, although is not confirmed, that the device malfunctioned and that it was a case of ‘wrong place, wrong time’. Separately, but also in the districts, a teacher working at an NGO sponsored school in Mir Bacha Kot was the victim of an IMF escalation of force shooting on 5 October. The individual’s car was damaged; however, he was not injured in the incident. The precise reason for the shooting remains unclear. Whether along district roads or in Kabul City, NGOs are advised to stay clear of IMF convoys and

either pull along to the side of the road where there is only a two lane road, or in a more built up environment, steer well clear of the vehicles.

Kidnappings remain a distinct concern in the capital, with various reports confirming that the trend is on the rise. Although difficult to assess, due to the fact that the majority of incidents go unreported, several high profile kidnappings or attempted kidnappings in the last several weeks have highlighted the possible risk to NGOs. Although virtually all kidnappings target GoA or influential/wealthy businessmen, there have been several recent, and reportedly credible, threats against internationals. Of note, there have been no received threat reports specifically mentioning NGO workers. Often NGOs cite the risk of kidnapping as the primary reason for curfews on international staff, although an examination of reported abductions in the capital since 2006 confirms that only one in ten abductions occur between 2100hrs and 0600hrs. ACG are the primary authors of abductions throughout the city motivated by financial gain, but also in some instances to settle personal disputes. As was graphically illustrated on 5 October, the kidnapping gangs are often well armed and organised, and willing to conduct attacks in broad day-



light. On that day, a contractor for the MOI was the target of a kidnapping gang in District 4, Parwan Sewom Area. The target as well as two of his personal bodyguards were killed at approximately 0900hrs as they attempted to resist the abduction.

As has become the standard following high profile attacks, threat reports mentioning SVBIEDs continue to be received, with varying degrees of credibility. The tactic could be perceived as being successful and therefore will likely be repeated in the following weeks. NGOs can significantly mitigate the risk posed by such attacks by avoiding high profile GoA, IMF, IO and foreign embassy compounds in the morning period. In addition, the avoidance of commonly used IMF routes, such as Jalalabad Road and Airport road during the same hours, will also assist in minimising risk. The SVBIED targeting the Indian Embassy on 8 October, which killed 17 and left 63 wounded, serves as a further reminder of the need to avoid such areas, even with the appearance of strong defensive security measures.

The election announcement, after an almost two month delay, will be made around the 18th or 19th of October. Most reporting suggests that demonstrations will take place whether there is a first round victory, or to a lesser degree, if a second round is announced. A form of coalition government, if negotiations bear fruit, would significantly reduce the threat posed from such protests.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Election demonstrations
- Complex attacks against high profile targets
- Abductions

PLEASE NOTE: Graphs in this report are current as of 6 October 2009.

PARWAN

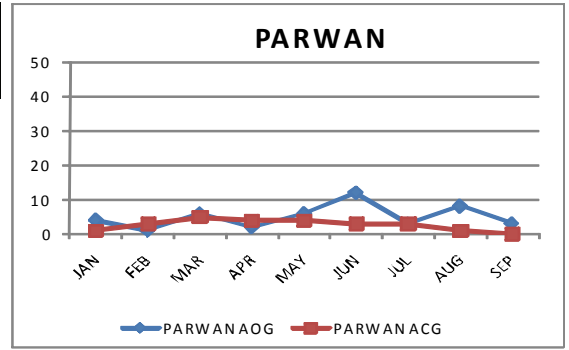
NGOs are progressively returning to travel through Ghorband on their way to Bamyan after a several month pause due to an

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Attacks on security targets, especially in the area of Bagram Airbase
- NGO-targeted criminal abduction
- Irregular IEDs targeting ANSF in the Ghorband Valley

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

RCIED attack on an IO convoy on June 17. Since then, there have been three further attacks along the route, although it should be noted that all occurred against ANSF. The most recent occurred on 12 October, when three RPG rounds missed an ANP Ranger in Shinwari. There is an acknowledged AOG/ACG presence in the Ghorband Valley; however, this has not translated into a direct threat against NGOs or the wider civilian community. Separately, an indirect night letter was received



by an NGO in Bagram, which explicitly threatened individuals working for the ANSF and implicitly threatened ‘foreign forces’. Considering its locality to the IMF airbase, night letters of this variety should be expected considering the number of local contractors and AOGs’ desire to sever local logistics support for IMF.

KAPISA

Rather than any overt hostility to NGO operations, an undercurrent of distrust exists in the west of the province towards non-indigenous organisations. Recent reports suggested that there may be opposition to NGO programs in Mahmudi Raqi, Kohistan I & II, as well as Kohi Band, where the majority of NGOs operate; however, transparent engagement with local communities and a degree of patience may significantly improve NGOs’ operating environment. In the eastern districts of Tagab, Alasay, and Nijrab, attacks on ANSF and IMF

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

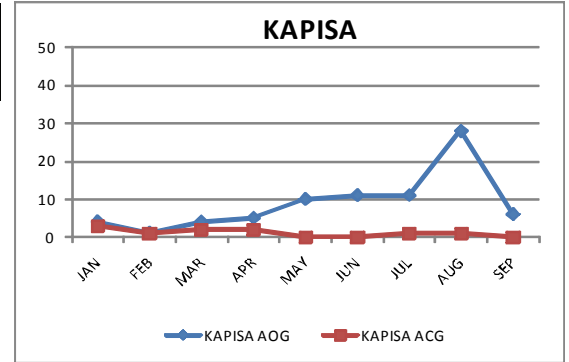
- Attacks on security forces, especially in Tagab and Nijrab
- Electoral related violence
- Rockets, IEDs, and mines

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	1

continue with a further IMF fatality recorded on 11 October in the Joybar Area of Tagab, following an IED strike.

The western districts present a comparatively different operating environment where the political climate largely dictates the security situation. The election has given rise to an increase in the number of factional disputes, which tend to manifest themselves into attacks on ANP, depending on how the district commander is aligned. As yet, there have been no civilian casualties as a result of the isolated attacks. The announcement of the certified election results may also serve to further inflame local tensions.

Another ingredient which is likely to introduce an element of insecurity in the following months is the introduction of additional IMF in



the east of the province. Although there appear to be no plans to establish a base in the west, at this stage it is understood that once arrived, the new force would perform occasional patrols in areas such as Kohistan I and II. If this is combined with the possible dispersal of AOG from Tagab to the west as a result of the increased number of IMF and ANSF, then the number of AOG-initiated incidents in these areas could in all likelihood increase.

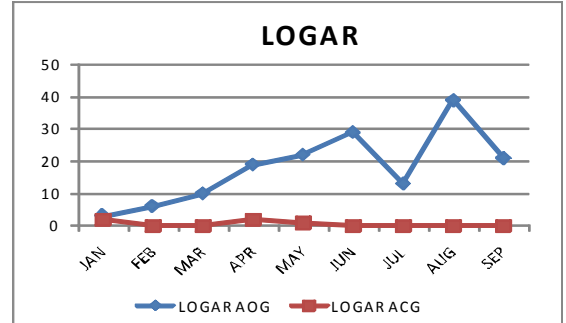
Although several arrests were made following the arson attack on an NGO sub-office on 28 September, there are no suspects which remain in custody. Most reports suggest that the incident is criminally motivated and not the work of AOG.

LOGAR

In the last reporting period, IMF have conducted a series of raids, often at night time, in Muhammad Agha, Baraki Barak and Puli Alam. The raids, undertaken on 1, 4, 7 and 10 October, resulted in the deaths of a number of suspected AOG, including a high profile commander, as well as several arrests. A raid on 1 October in Mughul Khel Area of Muhammad Agha is believed to have resulted in the deaths of one civilian and the wounding of two others. Although difficult to extract a

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

direct correlation, AOG have increased the number of targeted assassinations of GoA employees and alleged 'spies' in the past reporting period. On 12 October, two mullahs were killed by AOG in what was believed to be related to an IMF raid which killed a senior commander in Puli Alam on 7 October. Attacks against NDS employees seem to be the preferred tactic by AOG, with an NDS officer shot and injured in Puli Alam on 30 September; a relative of a serving officer shot and killed on 4 October, and a relative of the Muhammad Agha District Chief abducted on 14 October. Furthermore, an individ-



ual was also killed by AOG for spying in Baraki Barak on 10 October. Collectively, the incidents suggest a well developed and obviously utilised counter-intelligence capability.

The Kabul to Gardez road though Logar is significantly more secure than Highway One through Wardak; however, the risk of collateral exposure to AOG attacks on ANSF/IMF remains. If NGOs intend on using the road, which is not advised, then low profile sanitised travel is recommended, preferably after 0830hrs to avoid any morning IEDs.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- Attacks on security forces

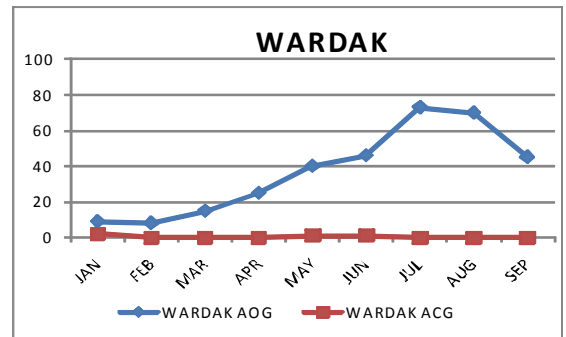
WARDAK

A pattern of AOG-initiated attacks against DACs and ANSF CPs and logistics convoys is firmly established in Wardak. Although the majority of incidents occur along Highway One, which dissects the east of the province, the Jaghatu DAC deserves special mention due to the sheer number of close range and standoff attacks against the facility. The DAC, in the last several weeks, has come under attack almost twice a week from well organized

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	0

AOG formations. When ANP convoys leave the DAC, they are typically targeted with IEDs or an ambush as occurred on 9 October. Therefore, ANSF freedom of movement and ability to exert any control over the rest of the district is severely curtailed. Interestingly, even though some engagements last for more than an hour, there are few reported casualties.

The frequent use of IEDs along Highway One and the road to Jalrez from Maydan Shahr almost solely targets ANSF, IMF, and logistics convoys. To date, the attacks have been targeted and do not represent an indiscriminate threat to civilians. Reports continue to be received of impromptu AOG checkpoints set up along



both roads searching for GoA employees and off duty ANSF. NGO travel along the district roads is not advised unless some form of community acceptance is assured. If travel is necessary, low profile sanitized travel should be considered a minimum.

Separately, ANSF and IMF offensive operations continue in parts of Saydabad and Chaki and have resulted in the deaths of 14 suspected AOG and the arrest of four others on 6 and 9 October. Of possible strain to ANSF and IMF relations was the killing of two IMF and the wounding of another by an ANP officer in Nirkh on 2 October.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- Rocket and IED attacks
- Intimidation

BAMYAN

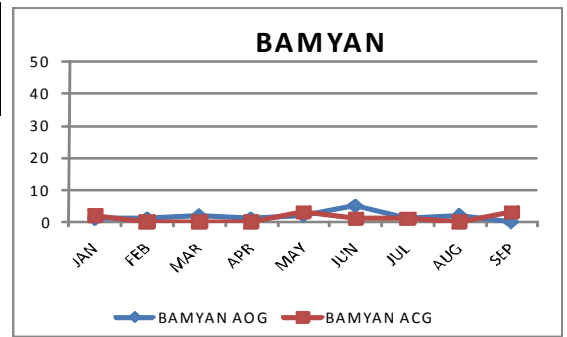
On 1 October, an INGO vehicle travelling from a sub-base office in the Waras DAC was stopped by two armed men in Jowqul Area. The NGO workers, three internationals and two Afghans, were robbed of their possessions

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG/ACG threat around Ghandak Valley, Shibar

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	1

as well as a sum of money for project payments. Since then, two individuals have been arrested in the case after being positively identified. During the robbery, none of the NGO staff were physically assaulted. Although often difficult, NGOs should limit who is informed of impending trips to district implementation sites as there remains the risk that



that information may be passed on to ACG, especially if payments may be being delivered. The robbery was somewhat surprising considering that there were no previously recorded security incidents in the district for 2009.

DAYKUNDI

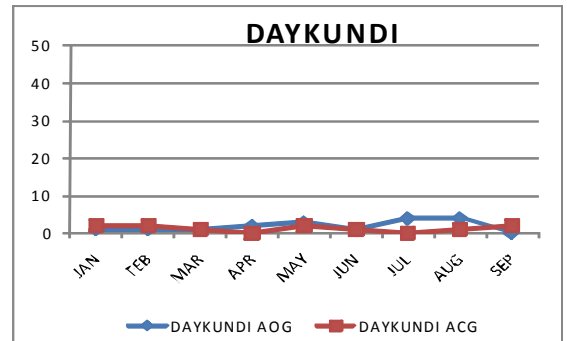
The status quo remains in Daykundi with Gizab and Kijran largely under AOG control with no government presence in Gizab and only scattered ANP check-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- High AOG infiltration in Kiti, Gizrab, and Kajran
- Low security presence throughout the province

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

points in Kijran. The situation will persist considering that ANP do not have the capacity to directly challenge AOG and the new PRT force will unlikely have the mandate to venture south into hostile territory. To date, the PRT has been well received; however, there is a likelihood that the extensive promises reportedly made to the local population may not be fulfilled and that a degree of frustra-



tion may result. Excepting a possible second round of the presidential election, the number of AOG-initiated incidents will likely decrease as the snow begins to fall in the weeks ahead.

BADAKHSHAN

A few safety incidents occurred in Badakhshan during this reporting period, reminding us that they pose just as much of a concern to NGO staff and operations as does the security situation. In Shahri Buzurg District Centre, a gas cylinder exploded in an NGO compound, harming no one but level-

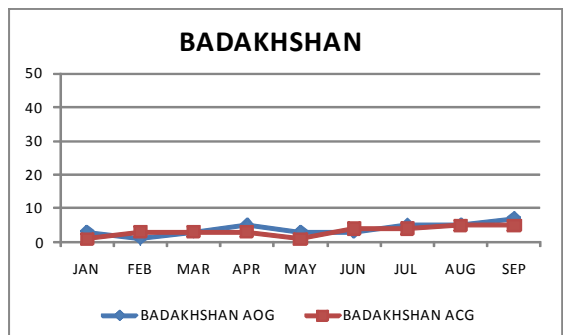
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Safety Hazards
- Local disputes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

ling the building. As winter approaches and the use of indoor heating devices increases, one should be reminded that incidences of fire and poisoning have claimed the lives of NGO staff year after year.

In Tishkan District, two NGO employees were killed and two shura members injured when their car careened off the road and into a gorge after losing control while travelling at high speed. The poor



state of repair of both roads and motor vehicles in Afghanistan means that the threat of injury or death in an accident should be taken very seriously, and threats from both cars and roads will not decrease as winter sets in and weather-related hazards increase.

BALKH

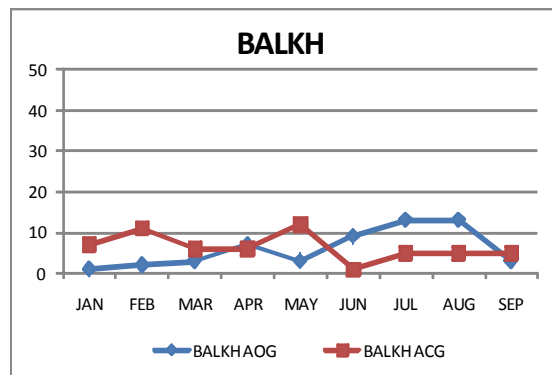
Threats to NGOs in Balkh remain as diverse as the geography and population of the province. As if to illustrate this point, an INGO faced two unrelated threats at opposite ends of the province during the last reporting period. One incident, an SAF attack in Balkh District, left no damage or injuries. Given the rarity of AOGs targeting NGOs for that reason alone, two likely motives for this incident are factional conflicts and ACG deterrence; the vehicle may have been approaching some illicit activity it was not supposed to witness, with the SAF volley occurring as a warning shot. In this scenario, mistaken identity (the vehicle was marked and high-profile) might have also played a role in that any high-profile vehicle would be a concern to an ACG whatever their affiliation or acceptance. In the east of Balkh, the INGO received another threat from a local AOG commander. The NGO had been previously threatened in September and responded with an active strategy of negotiation backed by the possibility of complete withdrawal

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG Expansion of Presence
- Targeted Attacks on ANSF & IMF
- Factional and Local Disputes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	8
This Report Period	2

from the area. The negotiations after the first threat proved successful in that the NGO was given leave to continue its activities in the relevant areas; however, the very success of that outcome appears to have contributed to the second threat. That threat reiterated the first agreement but mentioned disapproval thereof and threatened retribution in other areas of the Northern Region. The coherence of the threats (they were relatively maturely worded in a manner conducive to dialogue rather than a pure ultimatum) and their succession point pointed to the increasing ascendancy of AOGs in the area, particularly Baghlani Jadid and Kunduz, from whence they appear to have originated. AOGs are more highly organised internally and more bound hierarchically amongst one another. This means that NGOs may have the opportunity for more fruitful negotiations with such groups in order to secure access, but this does not negate the fact that many AOG are undergoing a steep learning curve along the transition from mere opponents to positive actors in their own right. As AOGs continue to organise, coordinate, and learn collectively, more such threats might be expected in areas such as eastern Balkh, an area that presents problems for AOG ex-



pansion due to low acceptance. While NGOs may lack the time, capacity, and wherewithal to negotiate with AOGs, they should also understand that such threat letters are often as much an attempt to suss out local actors (their capabilities and proclivities) as they are a led by the desire to harm the target organisation. There is no blanket recommended response for an NGO upon receipt of a threat since they come in a myriad of forms with a wide variety of motivations and circumstances; however, NGOs are encouraged to seek ANSO’s services from their local RSA in the event. Security in the west of Balkh remains unchanged with occasional ambushes and IEDs consistently targeting IMF, ANSF, and GoA. This was witnessed in an attack on an IMF convoy in Balkh District along the Mazar – Aqcha Road and also in a few IEDs targeting IMF vehicles in Chintal District. The precise spot of the Chintal IEDs, namely the towns of Arab Mazari and Alizay, has an established history of AOG activity. The posture of both villages seems to be defensive in that they do not go far afield to seek out targets but consistently hit those which infringe upon their home turf. Locals have previously ambushed an Independent Election Commission vehicle and set fire to an NGO vehicle in the area.

TAKHAR

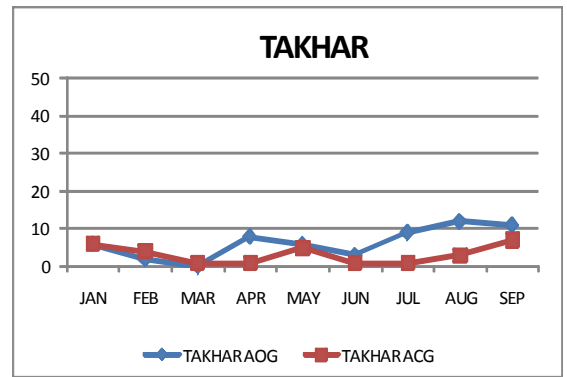
A recent spate of criminal activity has been noted in otherwise stable areas, including three separate incidents combining murder and vehicle theft in Bangi, south Farkhar and Khwaja Ghar. The fact that these acts are apparently random serves as a reminder to NGOs to be especially vigilant in areas outside of main cities, where governance is typically weak.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG activity
- Political conflicts
- AOG activity west of Bangi

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

Maintaining a low profile in these areas will help avoid unwanted attention from ACGs. AOGs continue to pose a threat in the northwest area of the province. In Yangi Qal'a, alleged AOG attacked the DAC with RPGs, leading to a clash between ANP and the attackers in which one AOG was killed. Of note, this incident may in actuality be connected to an ongoing political dispute that has been a source of instability in the district, rather than typical AOG activity. The road between Taluqan and Kunduz continues to



witness ACG and AOG activity. Expatriate staff should avoid travel west of Taloqan, as it has become increasingly dangerous. (If it is necessary for national staff to travel on this road, they should use low profile vehicles and sanitize themselves of documents connecting them to an NGO.)

FARYAB

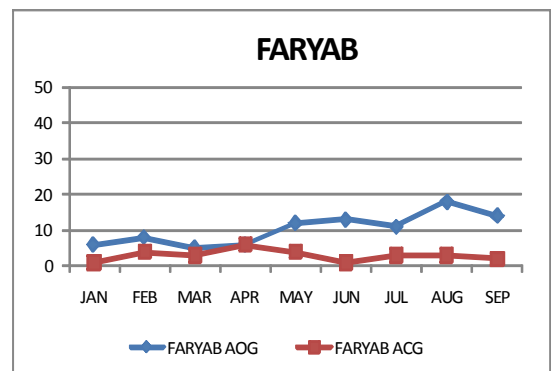
Faryab continues to present a mixed bag of AOG activity, with reporting having changed little from previous periods. A short-lived attempt to collect illegal taxes in Pashtun Kot was thwarted when the ANP appeared on the scene but remains an isolated instance in that area. An

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Targeted AOG attacks
- Local disputes
- Ethnic tensions

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

AOG attacked an ANP checkpoint in Qaysar and two IEDs, one of which detonated prematurely, were emplaced in a culvert in Shirin Tagab with the probable target being ANSF or IMF. A rare IED also injured a motorist in isolated Kohistan District, the reasons for its emplacement are unknown but likely relate to local conflicts. The major cause of last month's unrest in Maymana and nearby towns is now widely acknowledged to have been ethnic tensions, and NGOs working in



Faryab should continue to keep the possibility of further ethnic tensions in mind. Even if ethnic tensions themselves are not the proximate cause of a particular issue, they could constitute grounds for exacerbation of other disputes.

BAGHLAN

AOG-ANSF confrontation continues to affect security in Baghlani Jadid. In one unusual instance, ANSF fired mortars at an AOG facility in Baghlan Old City. The mortars impacted on private residences, killing 2 local civilians and injuring 4 others. The use of indirect fire by the ANSF is highly unusual in Baghlan, and NGOs in

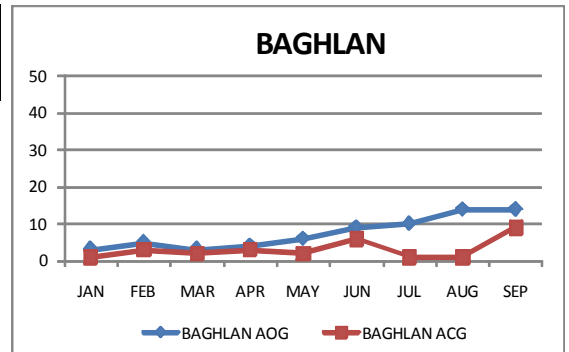
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG Checkpoints
- Collateral Involvement

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

the area should be aware of the escalated risk of collateral involvement. In addition, an AOG weapons cache was uncovered en route to Pul-e Khumri from the south, through Tala-wa-Barfak, confirming suspicions that the road was being used to supply AOGs in the area.

AOGs continue to establish checkpoints in and around Baghlani Jadid, particularly on the road north from Pul-e Khumri to Kunduz. These checkpoints pose the



three-fold risk of theft, unwanted AOG attention, and proximity to AOG/ANSF confrontation. It is not advisable for expatriate staff to take this route, while national staff, if they must take this route, should travel in low profile vehicles and sanitize themselves of documents connecting them to an NGO.

SAMANGAN

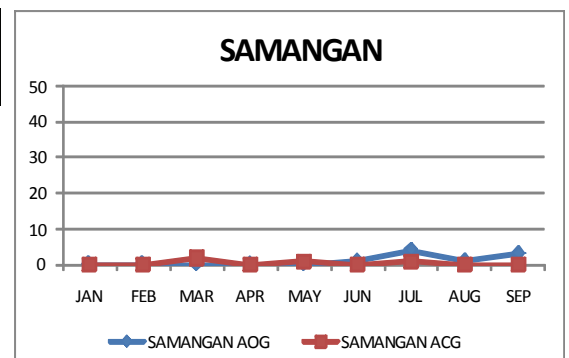
The last few weeks in Samangan have been eventful if not atypical. The kidnapping of a prominent local politician underlined the endemic factional conflicts that shape goings on there. Interestingly, the stated conditions for the release of the said abductee coincided with demands expressed elsewhere, such as the handover of a large weapons cache. The abduction was also accompanied by statements of apparently concerned local figures about poten-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Factional conflicts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	1

tial threats to the welfare of the NGO community. Perhaps coincidentally, an NGO-run school found itself to be the victim of attempted arson despite any apparent ideological motivation. As a place of little indigenous pro-AOG sentiment, it must be kept in mind that factional conflict has routinely proved to be the greatest threat to NGO security owing to the significant political capital that NGOs bear locally. Consequently, the pervasive rumours of an AOG presence, and of AOGs receiving IMF support, heard from certain corners, remain



groundless and highly suspect in their motivations. Another ongoing development in Samangan is the well-advanced construction of the new road that will eventually extend from Mazar-e Sharif to Bamyán. The road, by traversing a hitherto isolated area of the province, could introduce a significant upset by increasing mobility, altering local networks, and upsetting the power balance between districts.

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

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

ANSO: “..by NGOs for NGOs..”

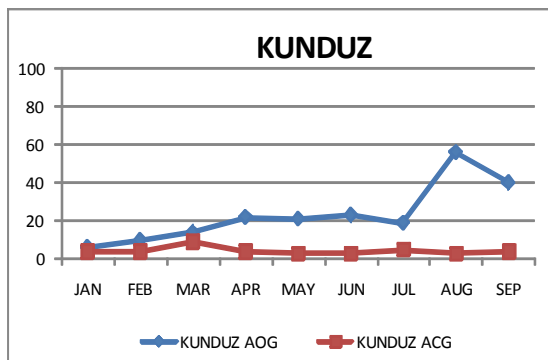
KUNDUZ

The rate of AOG-initiated incidents in Kunduz remains high, with 15 reported incidents, only slightly decreased from the same reporting period last month. These largely consisted of attacks on IMF, ANSF and GoA targets, including checkpoints, convoys and DACs, using SAF and RPGs. Most notably, an RCIED was emplaced and detonated within the private vehicle of an ANP commander near the ANP HQ in Kunduz City. AOGs continue to attack commercial enterprises, as well, including two private fuel tankers in Aliabad, a mobile tele-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	8
This Report Period	0

phone company in Imam Sahib, and the Imam Sahib Bazaar. Independent ACG activity in Kunduz remains nil; however, criminal groups may be acting as proxies for AOGs in various parts of their operations.

Despite concerns that IMF/AOG clashes in September would breed resentment against the international community and lead to an increase in NGO incidents, no incidents directly targeting NGOs have been reported since mid-August. While NGOs have not been directly targeted in Kunduz, risk of collateral damage remains high given ongoing clashes between IMF/ANSF and AOGs. In addition, an increase in threats against IOs may signify a similarly



heightened risk for NGO staff members. In the past month and a half, 4 threats in Kunduz District were reported against individual IO employees, warning them to discontinue their employment. This is notable since only 2 such threats had been reported in the entire preceding 10 month period. NGOs operating in the area should continue to maintain a low profile. It is inadvisable for international staff members to travel to the province, and national staff should limit their movement to necessary activity. NGOs without operations in Kunduz should avoid travelling through the province.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

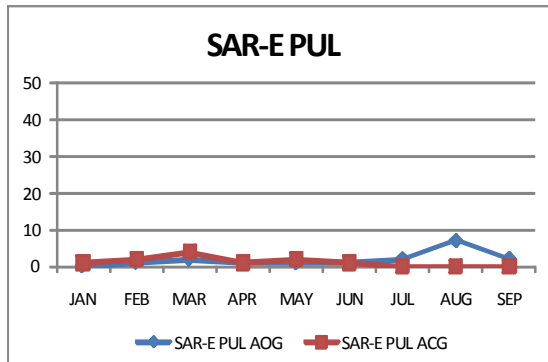
- Targeted attacks
- Heavy fighting

SAR-E PUL

The first NGO incident of the year in Sar-e Pul consisted of an armed group abducting the entire staff of a local NGO-run clinic. The attack showed the confluence of ACG and AOG interests in this area. After a day of holding the captives, the group phoned in demands to another local NGO, more or less equating it with the government. The kidnappers made two sets of demands; one to the government, that the hostages

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

would be released in exchange for GoA-held prisoners (a mixture of locals arrested for varying degrees of ACG and AOG activity), and one to families of the captives for ransom money. In any event, the captives were freed unharmed by a uniquely proactive response from ANSF which tracked down the kidnappers and directly engaged them. For the wider NGO community, the ordeal shows two important facts. The first is that it underlines the need for NGOs to vociferously demonstrate their neutrality because the kidnappers conflated NGOs with the Government of Afghanistan. The second is that it reminds us that NGO workers are still perceived



as relatively high-value targets, and this applies particularly to national NGO staff who tend to be relatively important people within their community but whose abduction often does not bring the massive national and international attention of the abduction of expatriates. Concerns continue unabated with regards to roving AOG activity in Sayyad District despite the lack of incidents during this reporting period. Such AOG movements have also been reported to extend into parts of Kohistanat District.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG Presence
- ACG Activity
- Low Understanding of NGO Neutrality

JAWZJAN

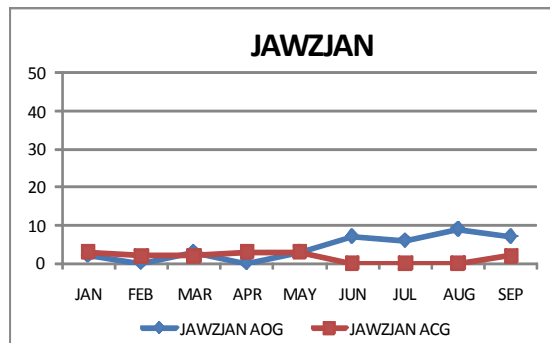
Jawzjan continues to be divided into two different zones of activity, with political and factional disputes weighing heavily in the northern part of the provinces, while roving and intermittent AOG activity affects the southern panhandle of Qoshtappa and Dar-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Political disputes
- AOG activity in the south

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

zab. In Aqcha City, an ANP officer was gunned down in public by an unknown armed motorcyclist. Although the direct motives are unknown they are likely to reflect wider political conflicts with the possibility of some overlap from ACG interests. In Darzab an AOG launched an attack on an IMF convoy, and in Qoshtappa, an AOG established a checkpoint for a short period and searched



vehicles. AOG checkpoints have not previously been reported in Qoshtappa, but it remains to be seen whether such activity is sustainable on the part of local AOGs.

BADGHIS

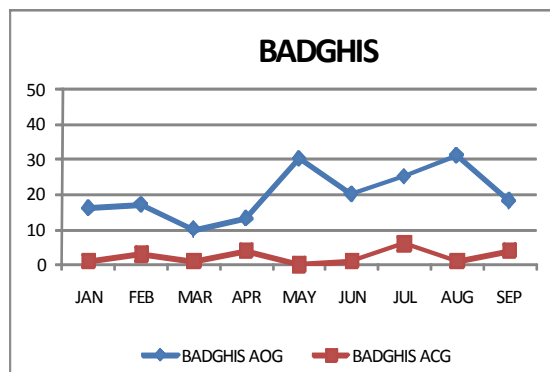
AOG initiated attacks against ANSF/IMF convoys still were commonplace in the province. During this reporting period, ambushes on ANSF/IMF convoys not only occurred in the traditionally unstable districts of Muqur

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG ambushes on IMF/GoA convoys
- Military operations
- Localised disputes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

and Ghormach, but also in Qadis, where on 11 October an ANA patrol was ambushed. Along with ambushes, AOG fired two rockets towards an IMF base in Muqur. To counter this AOG activity, ANSF led a few operations in the area of Murghab—Qala-i-Khan and in Qala-i-Naw City. In the latter operation, ANP seized some weapons and arrested one AOG member.



On 12 October, another significant incident occurred in Qala-i-Naw City: an armed clash erupted between two tribes over a land dispute. In the crossfire, four civilians were seriously injured, and the ANP deployed to stop the fighting.

FARAH

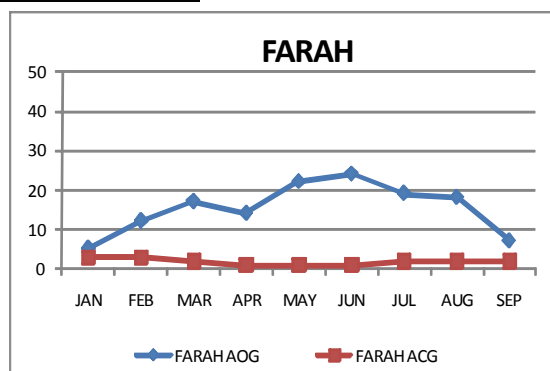
Events in Farah Province in the last reporting period have been largely dominated by an ANSF/IMF offensive operation in Bala-Buluk District—an important area of AOG activity. The operation that started on 30 September with the use of air assets was followed by search operations, mainly in

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs/RCIEDs
- Convoy ambushes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

Shiwan area, and resulted in numerous AOG casualties and significant seizures of weapons. Along with military operations, security forces rescued several victims of abduction; for instance, in the said area on 8 October NDS rescued nine victims. Another two victims were set free in two separate operations in Garani (Bala-Buluk District) and in Farah City.



On one hand these operations will most likely improve security in Bala-Buluk District, while on the other hand, there is an important risk that fleeing AOG elements will affect the security of neighbouring areas.

GHOR

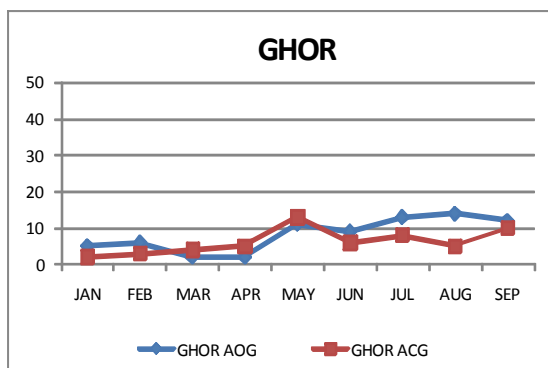
Criminal activity continues in Ghor Province, particularly in Taywara District, where an NGO employee was abducted by a group of unknown armed men and taken to Pasaband District while he was en route to his office. Mainly due to mediation efforts of community elders, though, he was released the following day.

It's worthy to note that this has been the third case of NGO staff abduction in Ghor Province in the

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	1

last two months. As was the case of the two previous incidents (in Tulak and in Shahrak Districts), no prior threats or warnings preceded this abduction. These incidents illustrate the active presence of armed groups in the area that are sourcing funds through banditry.

AOG activities continued with a rocket attack towards the DAC in Shindan District on 3 October as well as with an attack on commercial trucks carrying IMF supplies in Du Layna the following day. In another incident of note, on 11 October AOG stopped a vaccination team's ambulance en route to Chaghcharan City. The passengers



were beaten and the ambulance was damaged. Besides these attacks, Du Layna witnessed two inter-AOG clashes where two civilians were wounded.

One should also note that the current period in Ghor was characterised by significant weapons and explosives cache discoveries throughout the districts of Dawlat Yar and Charsada and of note, Chaghcharan City, where on 7 October security forces discovered explosive devices which were placed under a culvert.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Banditry
- Kidnapping
- Clashes between locals and AOG

HERAT

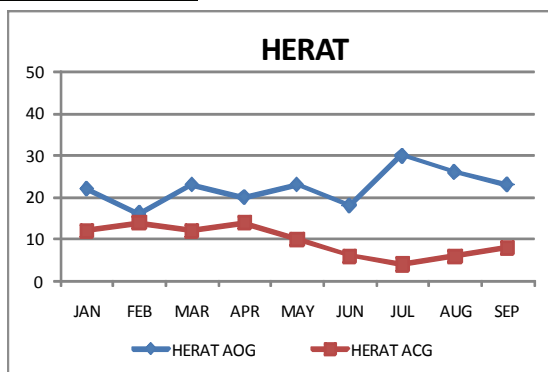
During this reporting period, Herat Province has witnessed one NGO-related incident. On 1 October, two INGO staff members were abducted along with their car on the Herat City-Airport road in Guzara District and their whereabouts are still unknown. Of note, Guzara District has already witnessed one similar incident in July this year when 3 INGO staff members were abducted, then released a few day later after negotiations.

To counter important AOG activity in the area, as well as their boldness and ability to operate outside their strongholds, ANSF/IMF launched a significant offensive in Guzara and Pashtun Zar-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	13
This Report Period	1

ghun districts. On 8 October, ANSF/IMF conducted a joint military operation supported by air assets in Guzara District where up to 25 AOG were reported to have been killed, among them a key AOG commander in Herat Province, Ghulam Yahya. Ghulam Yahya's forces are well-known in the area due to repeated rocket attacks on IMF bases as well as at the Herat Airport. They also are known for prominent kidnappings; for example, they claimed responsibility for the last abduction of two INGO staff members. In the same area, but on 10 October, ANSF arrested five AOG members along with another important commander, Bashir Qinaat, who was injured a few days before.

Shortly after these operations, a decrease in AOG activity has been observed, possibly also due to the



surrender of a few AOG commanders. With this, it remains to be seen whether this will become a trend, and it is also important to note that the possibility of AOG seeking retribution to avenge the death of Yahya cannot be ruled out. In addition, the risk of sporadic AOG actions to counter the ongoing GoA offensive should be taken into account; for instance, on 7 October in Guzara District, an IMF convoy was hit by an RCIED, killing one soldier and wounding another five.

Besides these threats, it is likely that military operations will continue in the area during the coming days. NGOs should consider recent security developments in Herat Province and take measures in order to reduce their exposure to the volatile environment.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs/ SVBIEDs
- Abduction
- Political tensions

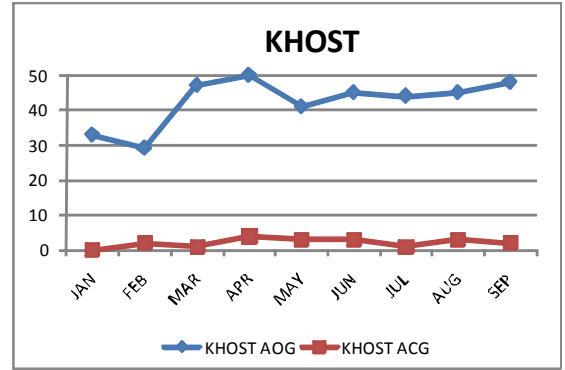
KHOST

On 9 October in Gurbuz District, AOG abducted 4 local civilians. One of the victims was working in an INGO supported NSP project as a treasurer but not officially contracted to the INGO, while the other three have no connections to the NSP or the INGO. Local elders have been alerted and are attempting negotiations; however, no demands have been made. The actual motive behind

the abduction remains unknown at this stage.

Khost Province continues to remain volatile, with a high level of AOG driven incidents occurring during the reporting period: 7 indirect attacks, mostly in Sabari district; 13 IED detonations, mostly in Khost City and Sabari District; and 2 abductions in Mando Zayi and Gurbuz districts. The abduction in Mando Zayi district was likely criminally motivated, although both were likely orchestrated with the intent to reap ransoms.

Indirect attacks and the use of IEDs continue to be the most common AOG modus operandi



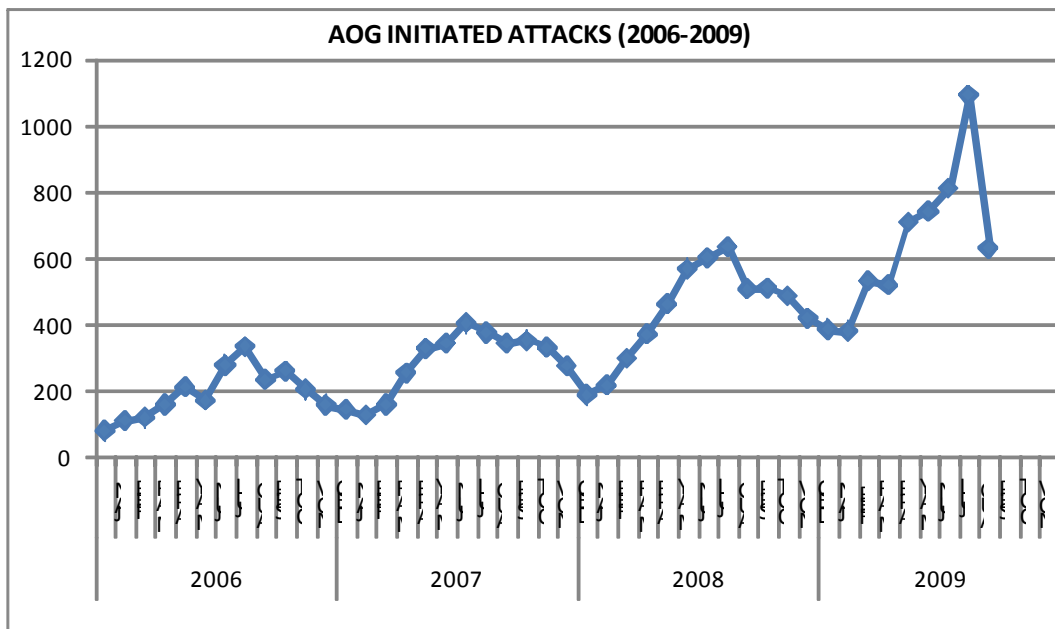
in the province. Of note, the threat of kidnap in the province remains high.

In the near future, AOG activity in the province is likely to be affected by the planned Pakistani military offensive into Waziristan, positively or negatively impacting material or manpower flows into the province and country.

Khost remains perilous for NGO operations, and NGO international staff are advised to limit their travel to Khost City.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Hostility to NGO operations
- Kidnap
- IEDs



LAGHMAN

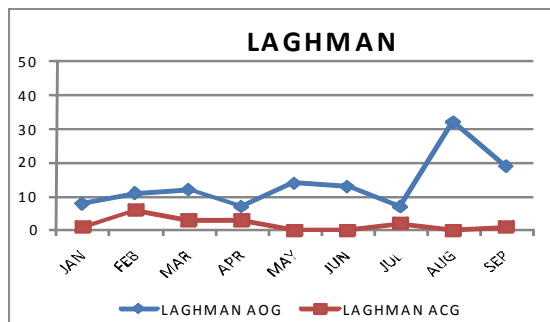
The security situation in Laghman Province is unpredictable and has a relatively moderate level of AOG incidents with 8 reported during this reporting period, in-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Attacks along Highway 1
- Continuing IED threat near DACs

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

cluding an even mix of IEDs, IDF aimed at IMF bases/convoys and supply trucks, and direct attacks on police posts. All AOG incidents occurred in Alishing and Qarghayi districts, and only three incidents occurred on Highway 1 (two attacks on two different ANP posts).



The security of highway 1 continues to deteriorate with a perceived effort to target check posts and IMF supply trucks.

NANGARHAR

The security situation in Nangarhar remains stable; however, a slight decrease in AOG-initiated incidents was observed this period with a total of 10 incidents across the province. Khogyani and Sher-

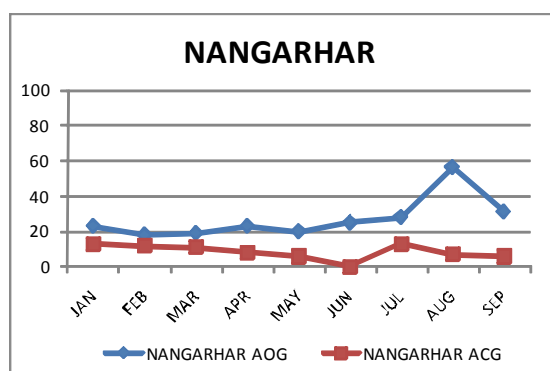
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Kidnap threat
- AOG attacks on JAF and GOA facilities
- Increased AOG activity in the western districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	8
This Report Period	0

zad remain the districts with the greatest threat to NGO operations due to a significant increase in AOG movement and activities, marked by two IED discoveries in Khogyani and one direct attack against the Khogyani District Centre.

Despite past AOG operations, Jalalabad City continues to be quiet—with 11 minor incidents that were mostly crime and an IED discovery.



Highway 1, though, saw two AOG-initiated incidents. Lastly, the sense among NGO local staff in Jalalabad is that most people are not particularly concerned about the presidential election and, hence, widespread violence is unlikely in the wake of an eventual election announcement.

NURISTAN

Violence, mainly due to limited GoA control, persists in the province. Two AOG incidents and one IMF airstrike were reported.

Little accurate information about ongoing AOG activities in Nuristan is available as there are almost no NGOs that share information

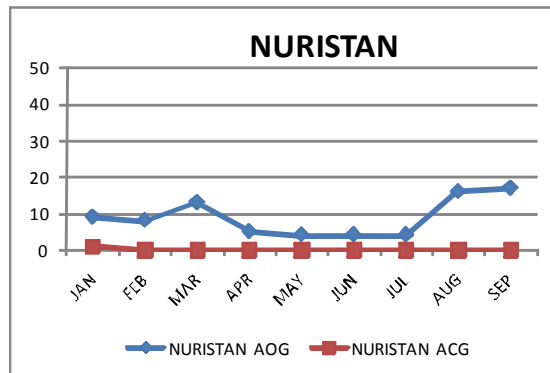
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Increased military operations
- Large numbers of AOG at large

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

present there, and as noted in the past, the lack of reporting should not be misconstrued as proof that the province is secure.

During the period, AOG utilized public perception of attacks against IMF and ANSF in Kamdesh District and the subsequent (but previously planned) IMF withdrawal from FOBs therein to encourage the idea that AOG achieved a victory over IMF. Be-



cause of the lack of information, ANSO would greatly appreciate any information, however trivial, regarding any known incidents, threats, or developments in this province.

KUNAR

Kunar Province remains violent and continues to contribute to the vast majority of AOG driven incidents during this reporting period. With a total of 62 AOG-initiated incidents being reported, Kunar had a very violent period. In keeping with historic trends in the province, direct attacks on security forces were the most common AOG tactic—50 direct attacks, mostly in Manogai and Ghaziabad districts. Additionally, eight indi-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

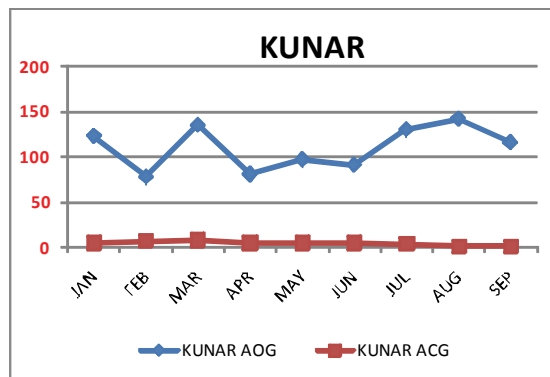
- Spread of AOG operations onto the Jalalabad-Asadabad Highway
- Indirect fire aimed at IMF/ANP
- Increased combat operations

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

rect fire attacks were recorded, while only one IED, in Sirkanay, was reported.

AOG activity in the northern parts of the province, particularly in Ghaziabad, appears to have increased significantly: 10 AOG incidents occurred during this reporting period, possibly owed to the migration of the fighting force that recently overwhelmed IMF in Kamdesh District, Nuristan. Threats of abduction and violence are strongly impressed upon locals who are perceived to be associated with or showing support for the GoA or IMF in the central and northern parts of the Province.

During the period, AOG kinetic activity in the province has con-



tinued to target IMF and ANSF, especially ANP CPs and IMF static positions and primarily through direct fire.

As noted recently, security along the Jalalabad-Asadabad Highway continues to deteriorate with more AOG activity near Patan, Nurgal District, where AOG have been ambushing IMF convoys and attacking police posts in the early morning. (If travel is necessary on the road, ANSO continues to recommend using it after mid-morning). The situation in Kunar is likely to deteriorate, and NGOs area advised to limit their activities to Asadabad City.

PAKTYA

On October 1st in Sayid Karam District a temporarily contracted driver employed by an INGO was ab-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

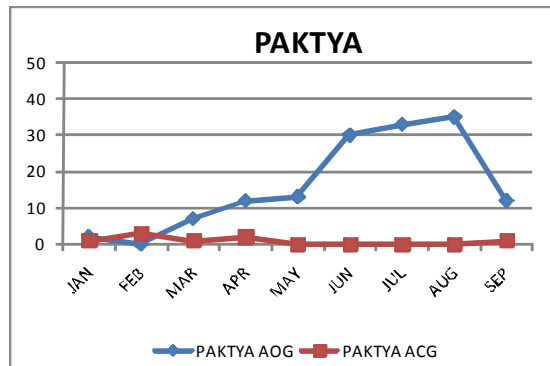
- Collateral Damage from complex attacks in Gardez City
- High kidnap threat especially along the Gardez-Khost Road
- IEDs especially along Gardez-

ducted by two gunmen along with his car. While being transported, two additional gunmen joined the group. After reaching their final destination, the gunmen began

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

questioning the driver about his employment and the said INGO's activities in Sayid Karam. Additionally, during his questioning, the perpetrators asserted that they had monitored the victim's activities for three days prior to abducting him. The driver was held until circa 0600 hrs on 2 October, when he was ultimately released. The perpetrators kept the victim's mobile and vehicle, but returned money that had been temporarily confiscated.

And On October 9 in Wuza Zadran District on the Khost-Gardez Road, an SVBIED targeted an



Indian road construction post, killing 6 of the company's guards and wounding an additional 3.

Other than the abovementioned incidents, the province was quiet this period with only 7 AOG initiated incidents, of which two occurred in Gardez District. The Gardez-Khost Road also remains a likely place for IED employment.

KANDAHAR

Insecurity remains the norm in Kandahar. The most prominent incident occurred when a suicide BBIED attacker targeted an IMF vehicle, killing 3 IMF soldiers and their national interpreter in Murcha Kaley of Maywand District on 2 October. Also, AOG attacked an IO convoy carrying food material. ANP responded to the assault and clashed with AOG for 10 minutes, resulting in 3 ANP wounded in the same district but on 8 October. And in another incident, a group of AOG orchestrated an assault against an ANBP post. ANP/IMF responded utilising air assets, and the firefight lasted for 3 hours, resulting in 15 AOG members and 1 ANBP killed and 2 ANBP and 12 AOG wounded.

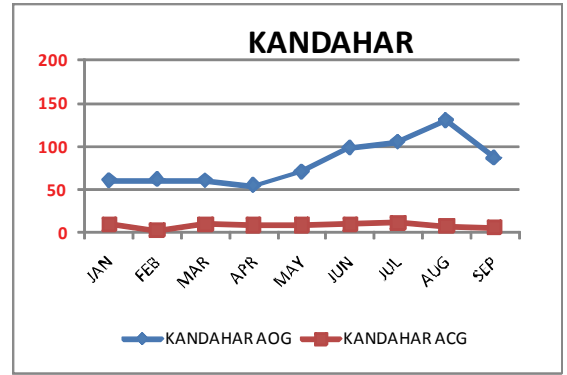
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Suicide attacks
- Kidnapping
- Roadside IEDs/clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	6
This Report Period	0

IMF/ANSF also conducted operations during the period; for example, ANP/IMF conducted a joint operation that led to the detention of 23 suspected AOG members in Pashmul of Zhari on 5 October, whilst ANBP seized a Toyota Surf laden with 600-700 kg of explosives in the Wesh Bazaar of Spin Boldak on 11 October. Additionally, ANBP captured a motorbike rigged as a VBIED, again in Spin Boldak, but on 14 October. Also, ANP seized 220 kg of hashish in District 4, Kandahar City, on 6 October.

In sum, 16 IED strikes were reported during the period. An IED destroyed the gate of the Barak Nika Primary School in Roh Abad, Dand, on 9 October, and an IED hit a vehicle, killing 1 occupant and wounding 9 others in Khakrez on 8 October. In an example of how AOG activity often involves youths, three boys aged 12, 14, and 18 were killed when an IED they were planting exploded



in Shah Agha Durahi of Zhari on 7 October. Arghandab also experienced at least one IED strike when an IMF vehicle was targeted, wounding 2 soldiers in Babar on the 6th.

An atypical incident occurred on 14 October in District 6, Kandahar City, when a verbal dispute between the athletes of 2 football teams during a match led ANP to intervene in an attempt to calm the situation—an intervention that caused the ANP to open fire (one athlete was wounded). The spectators reacted negatively towards the ANP, causing him to flee. Following the incident, the spectators set part of the stadium seating and the ANP guard post ablaze. Additional ANP consequently deployed to the area and cordoned off the stadium. Further discontent may have manifested because ANP refused to allow spectators' motorbikes and bicycles parked inside the stadium to be released.

PAKTIKA

Paktika witnessed a number of incidents, consisting of IEDs, AOG assaults, and IMF/ANSF operations during the reporting period. A total of two IED strikes occurred, with one hitting a vehicle carrying the District Administrator and the CoP of Shah Khel District, killing the Administrator and his body guard and wounding

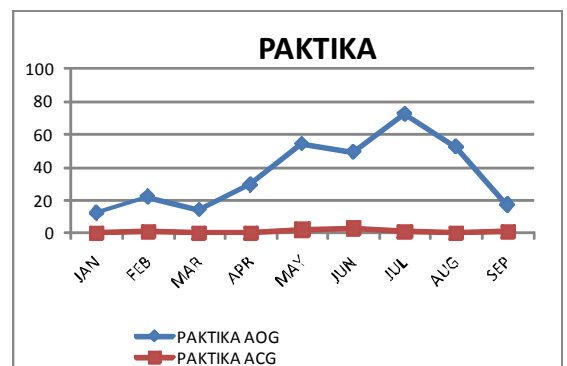
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- Abductions
- AOG and IMF/ANSF clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

the CoP near the Shah Khel District Centre on 9 October. And on 8 October, AOG attacked the Yahya Khel DAC for a short time. Additionally, AOG attacked a road construction company, killing 1 worker in Maghul Khel of Yahya Khel on 4 October.

Likewise, IMF/ANSF conducted several operations during the reporting period; for example, IMF conducted an airstrike against AOG, purportedly killing 25 AOG members in Murghi, Bar-mal, on 4 October. In another airstrike, IMF killed 10 AOG members in the same area of the



same district but on 3 October. In addition, IMF conducted an operation in Mangaroti of Sarobi, killing 11 AOG members on 7 October, and conducted an airstrike against AOG that reportedly killed 10 suspected AOG members in Pir Koti of Urgun on 12 October. Also, ANP/ANA conducted a joint operation, killing 2 AOG in Guashta, Khushamand, on 6 October.

HELMAND

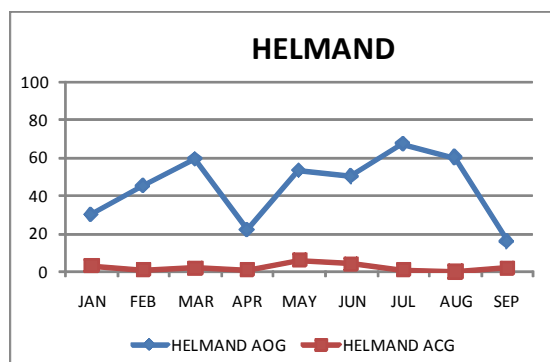
This reporting period in Helmand concluded with a number of significant incidents. In an unusual incident that occurred on the 1st in Lashkar Gah City, an expatriate worker involved in the Counter-narcotics Advisory Team (CNAT) reportedly shot dead a guard that had been fired by the said expatriate for disobedience approximately five days before the incident. It appears that the guard was invited back to his former organisation's compound by another staff member, possibly to resume his old position, and that the shooting was unprovoked. The expatriate perpetrator is said to be in ANSF custody.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Roadside IEDs
- AOG-IMF/ANSF clashes
- Significant AOG threat

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

During the period, AOG carried out several assaults against the GoA, ANSF and IMF; for example, AOG attacked the Nad Ali DAC for 30 minutes, resulting in 1 AOG and 3 civilians killed on 12 October. Also, AOG attacked an ANA patrol, resulting in 9 ANA soldiers and 1 AOG killed in Yakh Chaal of Nahri Sarraj on 5 October. AOG additionally attacked an IMF patrol, killing 1 IMF monitor and wounding 4 IMF soldiers in Garmser on 9 October, but AOG solely incurred casualties when they attacked an IMF patrol in Garmser on the 10th, resulting in the death of 4 AOG. AOG also targeted an ANP patrol for 1 hour, ending in 4 AOG and 2 ANP fatalities on 8 October in Nawa-i-Barak Zayi. IMF/ANSF conducted a joint operation during the period which reportedly led to 17 AOG fatalities.



The joint forces destroyed ammunition, a large quantity of drugs, and an IED factory during the operation in Gandum Zir of Kajaki on 6 October. And in another incident, NDS purportedly arrested 4 AOG members, including 2 foreigners, in possession of suicide vests, explosives, and technical equipment in Lashkar Gah City on 7 October.

Eleven IED strikes were reported during the period. In an example, an IED placed in the vicinity of an IMF base exploded on 7 October, killing one IMF soldier and wounding 5 others in Shorab, Nahri Sarraj, and another struck an IMF vehicle, killing 1 IMF soldier and wounding 10 others in Nad Ali on 8 October.

GHAZNI

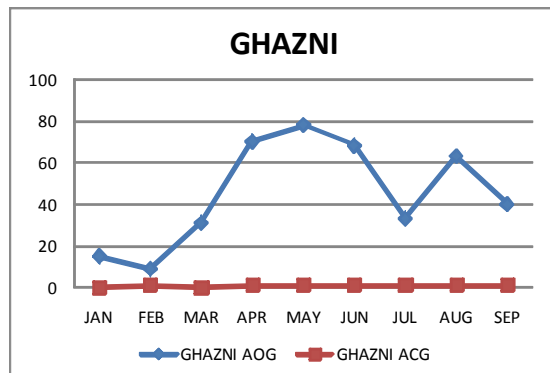
AOGs remain the dominant actors in Ghazni, especially in Qarabagh District. On 1 October, AOG attacked a PSC convoy carrying IMF supplies that ended in 3 trucks burned and 5 other damaged in Mushakai, Qarabagh. And on 5 October, AOG attacked PSC guards that were escorting an IMF logistical convoy, wounding 2 PSC guards, again in Qarabagh. In addition, AOG attacked an ANA/ANP post with an RPG that missed the target and hit a local

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- Convoy ambushes
- Rocket/RPG attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

bus, killing 2 passengers and wounding an additional 20 in Askar Kot of the same district on 6 October. Also, AOG attacked construction company PSC guards, resulting in 2 AOG and 1 civilian killed in Sarbaz of Ghazni City on 5 October. And in another AOG assault against an ANP post that lasted for 6 hours on the 10th, 4 AOG and 1 ANP were killed in Dasht-e-Bakawol of Ghazni. IMF/ANSF conducted several operations during the reporting period; for example, ANSF conducted a joint operation, killing 4 AOG members in Jum Juma, Mu-



gur, on 8 October. And on 9 October, ANA/ANP conducted a joint operation, killing 1 AOG member in Soor, Khugyani.

Furthermore, two IED strikes occurred during the reporting period; for instance, an IED hit an ANP vehicle, killing 2 ANP and wounding another in Bahbod Qala of Qarabagh on 7 October, and another struck an IMF patrol, damaging 1 tank in Diso of the same district but on 1 October.



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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:

Panjshir

Uruzgan

Nimroz

Zabul

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.

VACANCIES

ANSO is in search of a few good NGO workers. If you have NGO experience, an analytical background, and the desire to be challenged, all while being part of a close-knit team, pass your CV to operations@afgnso.org.

TRAINING

ANSO will be conducting communications and guard training for national NGO staff in Herat City in November.

The Centre for Safety and Development will be conducting security-related training in Kabul City in mid November. Check www.centreforsafety.org for more information.