



STOP FEMICIDE IRAN PLATFORM RELEASES AN 18-MONTH REPORT ON LETHAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN IRAN

NEW YORK, NY, July 30, 2024... StopFemicideIran (SFI), an initiative focused on monitoring femicides in Iran is releasing its annual report, the *2023 Report of Femicides in Iran*. In addition, SFI is releasing a mid-year report on the 2024 acts of femicide. These studies track and analyze femicide in Iran, a crime internationally recognized as one of the most terrifying and neglected phenomena – the intentional murder of women and girls. Through its interactive map, StopFemicideIran allows users access to open data research from the past four years through the present.

Femicides have ended the lives of girls and women from all walks of life. They have touched families in urban and rural areas and all levels of socio-economic status. This report underscores the need for increased awareness, advocacy, and action to address the root causes of femicide and protect women from such atrocities.

“We must collectively condemn and combat the alarming rates of femicide in Iran and strive for greater protection of women's human rights.” Said Marjan Keypour, the founder of SFI and longtime human rights activist. “It's imperative that we stand together to raise awareness, advocate for justice, and ultimately end the cycle of violence against women and girls. Every life lost to femicide is a tragedy that must not go unnoticed or unaddressed. We must dismantle harmful cultural norms and patriarchal systems that perpetuate such violence, and create a society where all women can live free from fear.”

Numerous findings from the report that demand immediate attention:

1. *Femicides are still prevalent.*

- The 149 recorded femicide incidents represent an average of approximately one killing every other day, or 13 killings per month.
- This decrease compared to incidents documented in 2022. The decline may be attributed to factors such as heightened government censorship, particularly online, and reduced public reporting by affected families due to a lack of trust in the government.

2. *Most victims are young, and their names are buried with them.*

- Analysis of the age distribution among victims reveals that 80% of the victims (120 unique cases) are young, under the age of 50.
- A broad spectrum of age groups are affected by femicide. The youngest documented victim is a mere 9 year old, while the oldest is recorded as 66 years old. The 9-year-old girl was shot by her father when he killed his wife for alleged honor reasons; the 66-year-old woman was found dead in the outskirts of Tehran. An initial investigation revealed that she was brutally killed by a perpetrator who had previously killed another woman in the same way.
- For another 30% of the victims, their age remains unknown.
- More than half of the recorded femicide victims, 85 individuals, remain unnamed in publicly available records, underscoring the significant anonymity surrounding these incidents.

3. *Reported cases of femicides occurred in Tehran province and western Iran*

- Tehran, the capital region, recorded the highest number of femicide cases, totaling 42 incidents, indicating a prevalence of gender-based violence. While this province is ethnically and socio-economically diverse, the available data does not reveal any background information of victims, rendering definitive conclusions on the correlation between femicide and ethnicity or socio-economics impossible.
- 45 cases or 30% of all incidents occurred in western Iran, including the provinces of Fars, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, and West Azerbaijan.

4. *Most victims are slaughtered, strangled, or shot to death.*

- The use of physical violence to silence and control women's lives is evident. 37 women were slaughtered and 22 strangled to death, amounting to nearly 38% of the total number of femicide victims. Another significant portion of victims, namely 36 or over 20% of the total number of victims, were shot to death.
- The data includes femicide perpetrated through other means— beatings, setting victims on fire, poisoning, running them over with a car, decapitation, and throwing women out of windows. Both women were sentenced to death for murdering their husbands. At least one of these cases reportedly involves a history of domestic violence, raising questions about a gender bias and lack of sensitivity in the sentencing process.

5. *Male family members, particularly husbands, are the main perpetrators.*

- In 85% of the recorded femicide cases, the perpetrator knows the victim. The data highlights the prevalence of extreme intimate partner violence, with husbands

being the perpetrators in half of the cases (79 incidents). Male family members and acquaintances, including the father, brother, fiancé, uncle, suitor, or son, also emerge as significant perpetrators, with 56 cases involving violence perpetrated by relatives other than the husband.

- In 15 cases (nearly 10%), fathers led the murder of their daughters, either alone or assisted by others. In-laws perpetrated at least 6 murders (less than 10%).

6. *Many femicides occur as a result of family disputes and in the name of “honor.”*

- The data shows the motivations behind femicide incidents in Iran, with family disputes cited as the primary motive in the majority of cases, (73 incidents). These disputes encompass a range of issues, including disagreements over domestic matters, financial disputes, and interpersonal conflicts within the family unit.
- Honor emerges as another significant motive, with 39 cases attributed to perceived breaches of family honor, highlighting the deeply entrenched cultural norms and social ex family surrounding family honor and shame in Iranian society and the way it can drive individuals to commit heinous crimes. Other motives, such as requests for divorce, rejection of marriage proposals, or refusal of second marriages, are cited (9 cases), further emphasizing the role honor considerations are motivating perpetrators.

7. *Femicide does not spare children.*

- Children are affected by femicide in several ways. In 15 cases of femicide, approximately 10% of total incidents, young girls were the direct victims of femicide. For instance, 12-year-old Rahil was decapitated by her brother in Serkhon, Hormozgan province, reportedly while attempting to safeguard the family honor amidst rumors about the girl’s skinny body shape.
- 10 cases of femicide involved victims who had been subjected to child marriage prior to their deaths. For instance, 14-year-old Mona Aghae from Ravansar, Kermanshah province, sought a divorce from her husband amid domestic abuse. Her family, however, resisted the divorce and resorted to killing her.
- In 5 cases, adult women were the victims, yet their children were forced to witness the horrifying crime scenes. In Tehran, for instance, a man fatally stabbed his wife in front of their two children following a dispute over finances; one of the daughters called the police after witnessing the killing.



2024 Mid Year Report

In the first half of 2024, StopFemicideIran (SFI) documented 93 acts of femicide in Iran, compared to 55 acts during the same period in 2023, demonstrating a near 60% increase. The following trends are noticeable from the midyear report:

- Husbands (including ex-husbands) are primary perpetrators of femicide. Intimate relationships are among the most dangerous conditions for women and girls.
- Women and girls are killed in what appears to be cases of escalated family disputes (46 cases). At least 11 cases are specifically attributed to “honor.” Women have also lost their lives for their marital choices, whether initiating divorce or rejecting a suitor’s marriage proposal (7 cases). In two shocking cases, husbands killed their life partners because they were dissatisfied with the quality of food that they had prepared. A man from Tabriz shot his wife to death because of excessive tomato sauce in the food. In another case she was slaughtered before her child.
- Femicide continues to be one of the most violent crimes in Iran, engaging the most determined murderers. They use violent methods including slaughtering (26), immolation (6), suffocation and strangling (22) and in four cases, more than one method to ensure that their victims were dead. More use of guns in 20 cases including a murder where the husband shot her after he had already beaten her to death.
- Majority of reported victims are young, believed to be under the age of 30. In six cases, children were witnesses to the violent act.
- Femicides are scattered around the country, with Tehran recording the most number of cases, so far this year. Other provinces of note include: Khorasan Razavi, Fars, and Khuzestan.

2024 Mid Year Report Snapshot

Perpetrators	
Boyfriend	4
Brother	6
Husband	47
Ex husband	5
Father	2

Methods	
Blows to the head/decapitation	8 (6, 2 decapitations)
Gunshot	19 +1
Immolation	5 + 1
Slaughter	26
Strangling	6
Suffocation	15 +1
Multiple	4

Affecting Youth	
Young, under 30	50
Children present	6

Excuses	
Honor	11
Cooking	2
Marital Choice	7
Family Dispute	46

Provinces	
Tehran	26
Khorasan Razavi	7
Khuzestan	4
Fars	5