

Annual Report
of the Aswat Nissa Association
on

FEMICIDE

FOR THE YEAR 2025





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We also extend our appreciation to everyone who contributed to the completion of this work, and to all those who continue, from their respective positions, to challenge impunity, break the silence, and defend women's right to life, dignity, and safety.

Above all, we dedicate this report to the memory of the women who lost their lives because they were women, and to the memory of every woman whom public policies and the justice system failed to protect and whose rights they failed to uphold.

For their lives and their memory, we continue to document, raise our voices, and resist forgetting.

A feminist salute to every woman fighting for a world that is more just and safer for women.

I. General Introduction

General Context: Femicide as a Structural Phenomenon

Far from being a mere statistical blip, 2025 marked a bloody continuation of a crisis. Femicide has escalated from a series of seemingly isolated incidents into an institutionalized social phenomenon—one that can be clearly tracked and analyzed. This structural, systemic violence targets women, both Tunisian and migrant, solely because of their gender. The devastating toll of lives lost this year underscores a grim reality: the private, domestic sphere remains the most dangerous place for women. Here, lives are cut short under the guise of «family disputes» and «crimes of passion»—euphemisms deployed in a relentless effort to normalize and excuse violence.

This year, the Aswat Nissa Association documented a chilling total of 30 gender-based femicides and attempted femicides. This alarming trajectory—surging from just 4 recorded cases in 2018 to 25 in 2024, and peaking at 30 victims in 2025—is a damning indictment of the status quo. It proves unequivocally that the home remains a hazardous environment for women in Tunisia, sustained by flimsy societal justifications that effectively trivialize acts of slaughter, stabbing, and fatal beatings.

The 2025 Socio-Political Context

The year 2025 was defined by a stifling socio-economic deadlock and a surge in societal violence, the brunt of which was disproportionately borne by the most vulnerable groups—first and foremost, women.

Politically, the tightening chokehold on civil society and human rights spaces continued unabated, relegating human rights issues to the bottom of the government's priority list. This crisis-ridden political climate effectively stifled any serious public debate regarding the escalation of gender-based violence (GBV). This institutional silence persists despite the alarming realities exposed by the National Institute of Statistics' seminal 2022 survey, which revealed that 84.7% of surveyed women (aged 15 and older) had experienced at least one form of violence in their lifetime. Ultimately, women have been left to face this peril alone under a judicial and security apparatus that routinely fails to enforce the immediate, life-saving protection mechanisms mandated by Organic Law No. 58 of 2017.

The Government's Stance: Obscure Silence and Tacit Complicity

In the face of this daily carnage, the government's stance throughout 2025 was defined by absolute apathy and a total disregard for official indicators and statistics. The executive branch offered nothing more than occasional, performative statements and vague communiqués completely devoid of the genuine political will required to confront the crisis. The refusal to declare a social state of emergency to combat femicide can only be interpreted as a form of tacit complicity. By remaining silent, the state actively perpetuates a culture of impunity, effectively giving perpetrators a green light to continue their crimes—a license further enabled by the failure of specialized law enforcement units to properly assess the lethal risks threatening victims' lives.

State Policy: Safeguarding the “Family Unit” at the Expense of Women's Lives

A glaring paradox and deep-seated political bad faith lie in the state's dogged adherence to protecting the “family institution” and its cohesion as an absolute priority—even when maintained at the expense of women's blood and lives. The official rhetoric centered around “preserving family ties” implicitly justifies turning a blind eye to domestic and intimate partner violence, which currently accounts for the highest percentage of cases. This discourse pressures victims into reconciliation, effectively treating a woman's body and life as a sacrificial offering to sustain a cycle of domestic abuse. A state that protects the abstract notion of “the family” while ignoring the slaughter of its individual female members is a state that fundamentally fails in its primary duty: serving as the ultimate guarantor of the most fundamental and supreme human right: the right to life.

The Systematic Siege of Civil Society: Suffocating NGOs and Dismantling Support Systems

The state's shortcomings in 2025 extended far beyond mere apathy; they manifested as a systematic and direct crackdown on human rights organizations and NGOs providing vital services to women victims of violence. This past year, civic space faced an unprecedented wave of administrative, financial, and legal harassment. This hostile climate forced several feminist organizations to suspend or halt their operations entirely, triggering the closure of listening and counseling centers that had long served as a critical lifeline for victims.

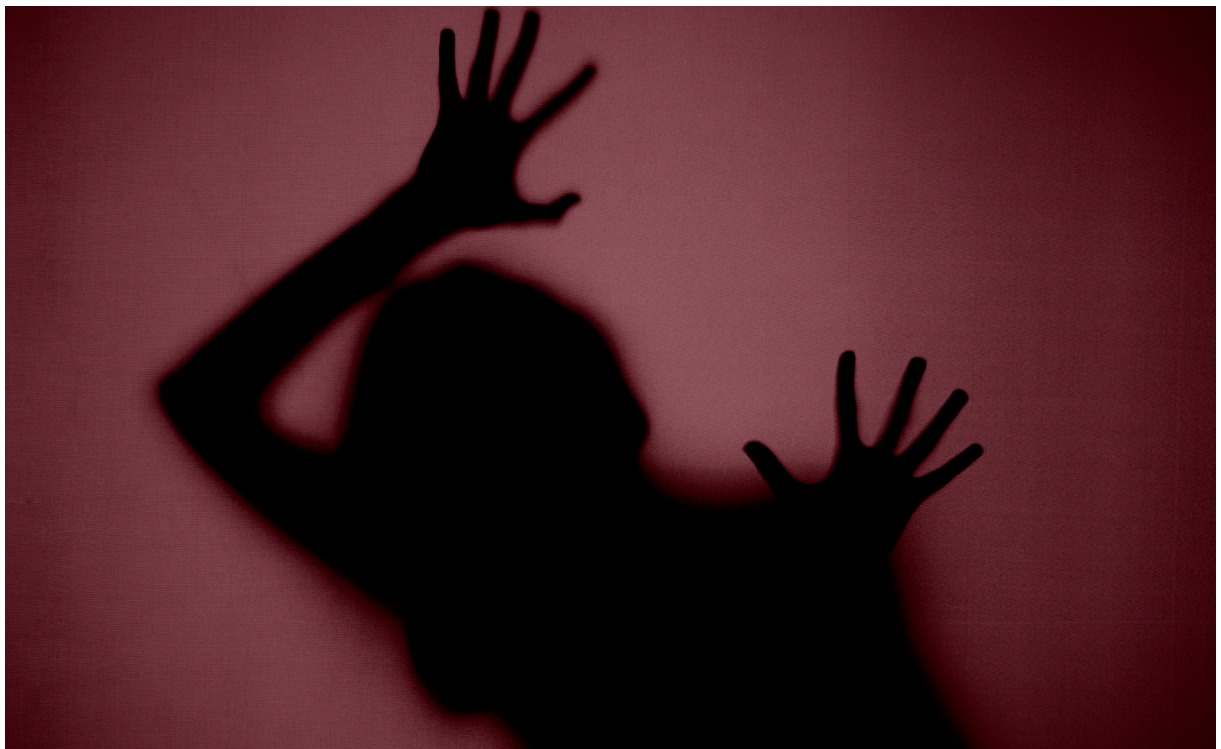
In tandem with this political and legal stranglehold, financial support was aggressively choked off. Funding streams were systematically dried up for some organizations and

drastically reduced for others, leaving available resources scarce to almost non-existent. This deliberate starvation of resources does more than threaten the institutional survival of NGOs; it paralyzes the entire victim-support framework. Consequently, countless women and girls are left completely stranded—devoid of legal aid, psychological counseling, or safe shelters to protect them from the brutality of their abusers—directly driving up the horrific toll of femicides.

The Escalation of Misogynistic Discourse Locally and Globally

Locally: Social media pages and groups—clandestinely and overtly instigated by conservative and populist factions—spearheaded coordinated smear campaigns against feminist movements and human rights NGOs. This rhetoric weaponized accusations of treason, painting the defense of women’s rights as an “alien, foreign agenda” designed to dismantle the Tunisian family structure. This digital and societal radicalization effectively legitimized violence against women and paved the way for the normalization of femicide.

Globally: This domestic reality coincided with a global and regional resurgence of right-wing and conservative populist rhetoric, under which hard-won human rights and gender-equality milestones have been heavily rolled back in international forums. This hostile international climate provided a political and moral shield for local authorities, enabling them to pursue policies of marginalization and violation with complete impunity, entirely free from the pressure of international scrutiny.



Dismantling the Protective System: How Hostile Policies Turned Law 58 into a Dead Letter

Stripping the Procedural Pathway of its Protective Substance

While Organic Law No. 58 of 2017 on the Elimination of Violence Against Women represents a landmark legislative breakthrough, security and judicial practices in 2025 stripped it of its protective essence.

The combination of a lack of political will and the ongoing siege on feminist NGOs has severely eroded civil society oversight of police stations and courts. Consequently, the normalization of violence has made a fierce comeback within the specialized police units tasked with investigating violence against women. Victims are frequently coerced into dropping charges or accepting reconciliation under the pretext of “preserving family cohesion.” This practice constitutes a flagrant violation of Article 25 of Law 58, which explicitly prohibits exerting any form of pressure on victims.

Among the most prominent structural deficiencies of 2025 was the persistent failure of security units to implement standardized, evidence-based risk assessment protocols when receiving victims. Deprived of continuous professional training and cut off from specialized NGOs that previously provided counseling and guidance, security units treated explicit death threats as mere “minor domestic disputes.” This administrative apathy and dismissal of victims’ complaints served as the direct catalyst for converting documented pleas for help into predictable, preventable cases of femicide.

Intersections of Violence and Marginalization: Migrant Women in Tunisia Caught Between Femicide and Racist Rhetoric

1. The Rise of Systemic Racist Rhetoric Against Migrant Women

Gender-based violence in Tunisia throughout 2025 did not occur in a vacuum; it was deeply intertwined with a pervasive broader climate of hate speech and racism. Undocumented migrant women—particularly those from Sub-Saharan Africa—bore the heaviest brunt of this mounting anti-foreigner hostility.

The year 2025 witnessed a dangerous escalation in racist rhetoric and stigmatizing practices across Tunisia. This phenomenon was not confined to social media; it was actively fueled by a populist political climate that falsely scapegoated migrants for the country’s economic woes and security crises. This hostile discourse placed migrant women in a state of extreme vulnerability, rendering them soft targets for a compounded form of violence that seamlessly weaponizes both sexism and racism.

2. The Failure of Law 58 to Protect “All” Women on Tunisian Territory

Although the scope of Organic Law No. 58 of 2017 on the Elimination of Violence Against Women is intentionally comprehensive—its core philosophy and spirit mandating the protection of every woman on Tunisian territory regardless of nationality or legal status—judicial and law enforcement practices have entirely stripped migrant women of this protection.

The constant fear of arrest and deportation, combined with the lack of legal residency permits caused by the state’s bureaucratic obstacles, has transformed police stations and courts into spaces of intimidation rather than safe havens. This systemic fear has deterred hundreds of victims from reporting the sexual abuse, physical assault, and attempted femicides they have endured. Ultimately, this structural barrier has further entrenched a culture of absolute impunity for perpetrators.

3. Intersecting Forms of Oppression and the Siege on Supportive NGOs

The government’s systematic crackdown, the forced suspension of several human rights NGOs, and the deliberate starvation of their funding have effectively dismantled the final safety nets available to migrant survivors of violence. Historically, civil society organizations served as the sole bridge to legal aid, psychological counseling, safe shelters, and healthcare services. In the absence of this civic support, migrant women have been plunged into absolute isolation. They are left entirely unprotected against a hostile spectrum of violence—from street harassment and workplace exploitation by employers, to abuse by domestic partners—without a single mechanism to preserve their dignity or safeguard their fundamental rights to life, physical safety, and psychological integrity.

4. The Failure of Immediate and Emergency Protection Mechanisms

At both the security and judicial levels, the year 2025 was marked by crippling delays in issuing urgent protection orders. Foremost among these are the immediate police protection measures—authorized by the public prosecutor—which many agents and heads of specialized units remain completely ignorant of. Similarly, judicial protection orders issued by family court judges are routinely delayed, completely defeating their emergency purpose, and are sometimes conditioned on impossible demands for highly vulnerable victims, with no regard for the imminent danger they face.

Even in cases where restraining orders or other protective measures were successfully issued against abusers, the lack of effective security monitoring to enforce them reduced

these orders to mere ink on paper. This systemic enforcement failure ultimately allows perpetrators easy access to their victims, enabling them to execute their crimes with total impunity.

5. The Deprivation of Legal Aid and Judicial Support

The financial and administrative stranglehold on NGOs has stripped survivors of gender-based violence of crucial legal representation and free judicial support. Although Article 13 of Law No. 58 explicitly guarantees victims the right to state-funded legal aid, the Ministry of Justice's bureaucratic red tape and a severe lack of logistical support have rendered this right virtually inaccessible.

Consequently, survivors without financial resources are forced to navigate a labyrinth of complex legal procedures on their own, further burdened by a lack of legal literacy and a judiciary that lacks a gender-sensitive approach. At the same time, starved of resources and targeted by arbitrary suspensions, civil society organizations have been left utterly unable to step in and provide these vital legal services to those in need.

6. The Critical Shortage of State-Run Shelters

This judicial and enforcement failure is further compounded by the systemic collapse of the emergency shelter system. While Article 4 of Law No. 58 legally mandates that the state provide safe shelters for survivors and their children across all regions and governorates, the executive branch has consistently shirked this duty, shifting the entire burden onto civil society.

Furthermore, due to a severe lack of specialized training for shelter staff, inadequate state funding, and a hostile policy blocking foreign financial support, several government shelters have been forced to close entirely. The few facilities that manage to remain open are crippled by administrative chaos, financial starvation, and severe logistical bottlenecks.

II. Data Monitoring and Analysis

Methodology Adopted by “Aswat Nissa”

The association “Aswat Nissa” adopts a rigorous, scientific, and human rights-based methodology to track and document cases of femicide. This approach serves to counter the stark lack of official data and transparency surrounding the phenomenon. Managed by the association’s Feminist Research Unit, the methodology is built upon the following core pillars:

1. Field- and Media-Based Investigation and Documentation

Due to the lack of official femicide data—which is mandated to be released by the National Observatory for the Prevention of Violence Against Women—the association’s Research Unit carries out digital and media scanning. This process entails tracking local and regional outlets, along with social media platforms, to monitor any reports of suspicious deaths or femicide. Consequently, the media serves as the sole source for collecting information and data on these crimes.

In terms of data and information, this report relies on coverage from national media across various platforms. In reality, however, this coverage does not capture the full details and circumstances of the crimes committed. Additionally, the lack of follow-up on emerging details by journalists hinders Aswat Nissa’s ability to fully monitor these cases and produce reports that cover every aspect and circumstance of the crimes.

In partnership with the Association of Women and Citizenship in El Kef (AFTC), Aswat Nissa collects data from reliable sources to verify and confirm cases of femicide. These findings are subsequently published on a dedicated page tracking femicide crimes.

2. Gender-Based Characterization

The association “Aswat Nissa” applies the term “Femicide” to intentional homicides committed against women because of their gender, a phenomenon recognized as gender-based killing. Such crimes represent the ultimate expression, and indeed the final threshold, of violence against women. This deadly violence stems from patriarchal dominance and the desire to control and possess women and their bodies, with the prevailing patriarchal cultural and social context serving as a key factor in defining this phenomenon.

Beyond monitoring crimes driven by unequal gender power dynamics, the association sheds light on the victim-offender relationship, noting that statistics show the vast majority of these crimes are committed by intimate partners (whether current or former husbands and fiancés).

3. Database Restructuring and Design (Statistical Categorization)

The Association analyzes these crimes using precise geographical and behavioral indicators, including:

- **Geographical Distribution:** Mapping, identifying, and measuring the specific governorates and regions where the recorded crimes occurred.
- **Chronological Distribution:** Tracking the specific months in which crimes were committed to understand the temporal or spatial contexts driving the escalation and surge in these crimes.
- **Socio-Demographic Profiling:** Analyzing demographic data for both victims and perpetrators. This allows for the identification of victim and offender profiles, highlighting the most targeted demographics and the specific vulnerabilities that lead to femicide.
- **Abuser-Victim Relationship:** Detailing the nature of the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, as well as the instruments of violence and the specific mechanics of the killings, serves to document the barbaric methods and means employed— such as stabbing, throat-slitting, strangulation, and immolation. Ultimately, exposing these brutal tactics illustrates the distinct, systemic pathology that separates femicide from ordinary homicide.

4. Critical Analysis of Public Policy and the Judiciary

This methodology evaluates the efficacy (or failure) of the implementation of Organic Law No. 58 of 2017 on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. It systematically reviews protection and reporting mechanisms (such as the handling of prior complaints filed by victims before a crime occurs) to expose the systemic failure of state institutions to accurately assess risks and protect victims.

This methodological framework culminates in the Association's annual report on femicide statistics. By publishing these findings, the Association aims to exert strategic pressure on policymakers to formally acknowledge the scale of this crisis and to formulate genuine, actionable preventative strategies.



III. Annual Femicide Data

Date of the Crime	Crime Scene Location (area)	Victim's Status	Victim's Age	Victim's Marital Status	Perpetrator's Relationship to Victim	Method and Weapon /Means Used	Perpetrator's Age	Prior Violence or Femicide Attempts
20/01	Gafsa (Zanouch)	Wife	40	Married	Husband	slit-throated with a sharp tool (she and her son)	50s	N.M in the investigation
21/01	Kelibia	Mother	60s	Married	Son	doused with corarosive substance	20s	criminal record for theft
03/02	Monastir, (Ksar Hellal)	Mother	63 y.o	Married	Son	pushed down the stairs	26 y.o	criminal record for drug offenses
15/02	Kairouan (Houmet El Jamea)	Wife	48 y.o	Married	Husband	stabbed with a knife	50s	N.M in the investigation
21/02	Gafsa	Wife	40s	Married	Husband	strangled	N.M	Medical requisitions have been issued
14/03	Manouba (Tebourba)	Wife	N.M	Married	Husband	Stabbed with a knife	N.M	N.M in the investigation
06/04	Manouba (El Kba'a)	Ex-wife	45 y.o	Divorced	Ex-husband	Stabbed several times with a knife	N.M	N.M in the investigation
09/04	Tozeur	Wife	N.M	Married	Husband	Set on fire (immolated)	N.M	N.M in the investigation
27/04	Manouba (Oued Ellil)	Mother	50s	Married	Son	Set on fire (immolated)	N.M	N.M in the investigation
31/05	Sidi Bouzid (Jelma)	Mother-in-law (Wife's mother)	N.M	N.M	Daughter's husband	Stabbed several times with a knife	N.M	N.M in the investigation
05/06	Jendouba (Bou Salem)	Ex-wife	50s	Divorced	Ex-husband	Multiple stabs inflicted with a sharp instrument, the perpetrator then poured a flammable substance and set her on fire	N.M	A complaint filed by the victim regarding alimony sparked the perpetrator's rage
31/07	Gabes (Mtorrech)	Young woman	N.M	N.M	Unknown	Strangled	N.M	N.M in the investigation
31/07	Gabes (Oued El Serag)	N.M	40s	N.M	Unknown	N.M	N.M	N.M in the investigation

Date of the Crime	Crime Scene Location (area)	Victim's Status	Victim's Age	Victim's Marital Status	Perpetrator's Relationship to Victim	Method and Weapon / Means Used	Perpetrator's Age	Prior Violence or Femicide Attempts
06/08	Kairouan (Bou Hajla)	Uncle's wife, mother of four children	50s	Married	Husband's niece	N.M	20s	Fighting and violence
28/06	Ben Arous	Wife	N.M	Married	Husband	Strangled	N.M	N.M in the investigation
30/06	Kairouan (Sbikha)	Wife	N.M	Married	Husband	grabbed his wife by the hair and gouged her eyes out using a wire brush	N.M	Fighting and violence
18/09	Gabes (El Hamma)	Wife	N.M	Divorced	Ex-Husband	stabbed	N.M	Fighting and violence
25/09	Ariana (Ettadhamen)	Mother	60s	N.M	Son	The perpetrator struck his mother with a brick on her head and body, then repeatedly stabbed her in the neck and body until she died	30s	Mother refuses to give son money for drugs
13/10	Sousse (Bouhsina / Boukhzar)	Wife	N.M	Married	Husband	Strangled	40s	The perpetrator , who has a criminal past, choked his wife to death after a severe quarrel and tried to fake her suicide to hide his crime.
28/10	Sfax City	Wife	N.M	Married	Husband	A sharp object and an attempted throat-slitting	N.M	N.M in the investigation
28/10	Ariana (Raoued)	Wife	N.M	Married	Husband	Stabbed several times with a knife	N.M	N.M in the investigation
08/10	Gafsa	Daughter	N.M	Single	Father	N.M	N.M	N.M in the investigation
03/12	Mahdia (Souassi)	Young woman	N.M	Not married	N.M	Set on fire (immolated)	N.M	N.M in the investigation
28/12	Ariana (Menzah)	Young woman	N.M	Not married	Partner / boyfriend	Severe violence and strangulation	N.M	N.M in the investigation

IV. Data Analysis

1. Incidence of Femicides, Attempted Femicides, and Victim Toll

In 2025, a total of 24 femicides and 5 attempted femicides (where the victims' ultimate fates remain unknown) were documented, compared to 25 femicides and a single documented attempt in 2024. Although the quantitative data reflects a nearly identical baseline in the total number of lethal crimes against women compared to the previous year—albeit with a noticeable rise in reported attempted murders—the figures disclosed for 2025 fail to reflect the true magnitude of the reality.

Tunisian human rights organizations consistently maintain that these documented figures represent only the absolute minimum, capturing only what was officially reported or tracked through media monitoring and NGO intake records in the ongoing absence of comprehensive, centralized state statistics.

Furthermore, the political clampdown targeting the media landscape and journalists throughout 2025 severely stifled investigative freedom and the dissemination of information. This resulted in a stark decline in social-justice journalism, as media outlets became predominantly consumed with defending their own personnel. Under heightened editorial pressure, the airtime and print space dedicated to tracking and investigating femicides were drastically reduced.

Concurrently, the public sphere in Tunisia experienced intense polarization centered on major political and civil rights crises (such as political trials, decrees restricting freedom of expression, migration management, and broader civil liberties). This crowded news cycle effectively relegated gender-based violence to a secondary priority within public discourse, depriving the crisis of femicide of the critical media coverage and urgency it demands.

2. Chronological Distribution of Crimes (Monthly Breakdown)

Months	Number of crimes	Attempted murder
January	2	
February	3	
March	1	1
April	3	1
May	1	1
June	3	2
July	2	
August	1	
September	2	
October	4	
November	0	
December	2	

These crimes spanned every month of the year with the sole exception of November. The highest concentration occurred in October, which recorded a peak of 4 femicides. This spike can be correlated with the return to schools and universities and the conclusion of the summer holidays—a period characterized by acute financial strain on households and increased friction in public transit and communal spaces. These compounding factors systematically escalate interpersonal friction and psychological distress, which can ultimately culminate in lethal violence.

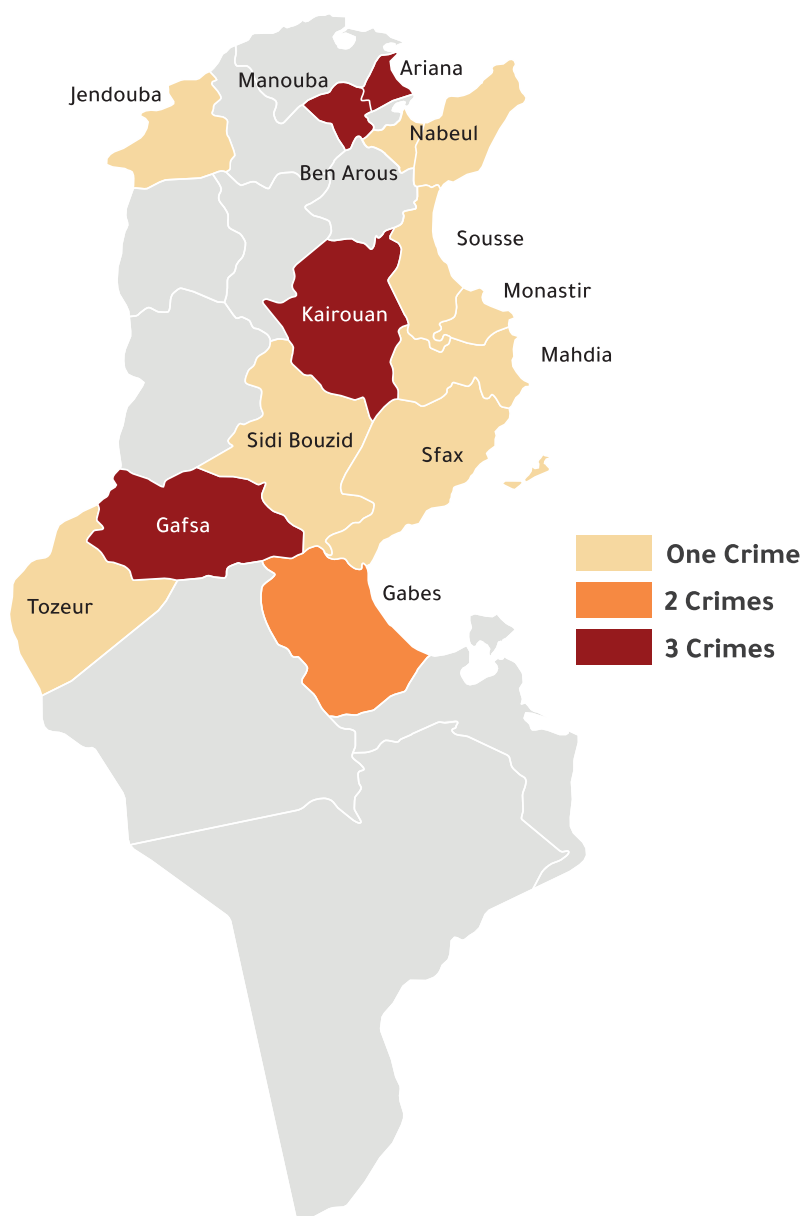
This peak was followed by February, April, and June, each recording 3 femicides. Additionally, April recorded 1 attempted femicide, while June saw 2 attempts. Moving down the timeline, December, January, July, and September each accounted for 2 monthly offenses. March and May each recorded 1 femicide and 1 attempted murder, while August recorded only a single lethal crime. Notably, August 2025 witnessed a substantial decline in violence compared to the previous year, dropping to just 1 offense from the 7 recorded in August 2024.

3. Geographical Distribution of Crimes

In 2024, femicides impacted 11 governorates, characterized by a heavy hyper-centralization within the Greater Tunis region, which alone accounted for 16 offenses (64% of the national total). This concentration was primarily driven by 8 crimes in the capital city of Tunis and 6 in Ariana.

In contrast, the data for 2025 reveals a distinct geographic expansion and decentralization of these offenses. Femicides extended across 14 governorates, demonstrating a noticeable decline in centralization within the capital and a concurrent proliferation into the Central, Southern, and Northwestern governorates. Crucially, inland governorates such as Gafsa and Kairouan recorded high rates that leveled completely with major urban centers (like Ariana and Manouba) each witnessing 3 offenses.

Geographical Distribution of Crimes (2025)



General Statistical Comparison and Geographical Trends

Governorate and Region	Number of Crimes 2024	Number of Crimes 2025	Trend of Change and Statistical Direction
Tunis Governorate	8	0	Sharp decline after being at the top
Ariana	6	3	50% decrease, yet still high
Manouba	1	3	Notable increase, tripled
Ben Arous	1	1	Stability
Gafsa	1	3	Sharp increase, tripled
Kairouan	1	3	Sharp increase, tripled
Gabes	0	2	Emergence of a new hotspot for lethal violence
Tozeur	0	1	Entry of a new governorate into the statistics
Monastir	0	1	Entry of a new governorate into the statistics
Kelibia/ Nabeul	1 Nabeul as a whole	1 Kelibia specifically	Index stability
Sidi Bouzid	1	1	Index stability in the region
Jendouba	1	1	Index stability in the region
Sousse	2	1	Slight drop of 50%
Sfax	1	1	Numerical stability
Mahdia	1	1	Numerical stability

Ariana Governorate stands out as the common denominator, maintaining a critically high risk index across both years (6 offenses in 2024 compared to 3 in 2025). Concurrently, Manouba Governorate registered a deeply alarming surge, jumping from just a single crime in 2024 to 3 in 2025, while Ben Arous Governorate maintained relative stability, recording 1 crime in each respective year.

While the staggering figures for Tunis Governorate receded in 2025, this decline was offset by a sharp, unprecedented escalation in Gafsa, Kairouan, and Gabes, which averaged 3 crimes each. This shift demonstrates that the phenomenon has become trans-regional and is no longer confined to highly populated metropolitan centers.

The abrupt spike in Gafsa and Kairouan (with 3 crimes each)—compared to a baseline of just 1 each in 2024—reflects the spillover of severe socio-economic distress into inland governorates. In these regions, domestic violence intersects with systemic unemployment and a total vacuum of immediate psychological and social support mechanisms for at-risk women, creating volatile environments where conflicts rapidly degenerate into tragic crimes.

A comparative analysis of the 2024 and 2025 datasets underscores a geographical shift in Tunisian femicide trends, one that is intrinsically linked to structural development disparities and socio-economic inequities between the coastal governorates (and major urban centers) and the inland governorates of the North, the Midwest, and the South. In 2025, inland regions (Gafsa, Kairouan, Sidi Bouzid, Jendouba, Tozeur) experienced a pronounced surge in lethal violence against women—evidenced by Gafsa and Kairouan peaking at 3 crimes each. Within these territories, the structural drivers of femicide are rooted in the following interconnected factors:

- **Economic Vulnerability and Unemployment:** Inland governorates consistently record the highest rates of poverty and unemployment in the country. In fact, the perpetual financial strain within households fuels chronic interpersonal conflict which, in the absolute absence of economic relief, escalates into fatal physical violence.
- **Deficiencies in Support and Protection Mechanisms:** Compared to the Greater Tunis area, inland territories suffer from a critical deficit of safe shelters for women survivors of gender-based violence. This severe institutional shortage deprives victims of any viable, secure refuge, effectively trapping them under the same roof as their abusers until the violence culminates in feminicide.
- **Social Stigmatization and Geographical Isolation:** Deeply entrenched social customs in certain inland communities exert immense pressure on women to endure abuse and abstain from reporting it (often under the guise of “preserving family honor” or protecting its privacy). This systemic stigmatization is further compounded by the stark geographical isolation of rural and remote areas, leaving victims physically cut off from distant police stations and judicial bodies.

Conversely, the coastal belt and metropolitan centers—including the Greater Tunis area (Tunis, Ariana, Manouba, Ben Arous), Sousse, Sfax, Nabeul/Kelibia, and Monastir/Ksar Hellal—continue to record staggering figures, despite benefiting from significantly higher development indicators. This is evidenced by the crisis in Greater Tunis, which peaked at 16 offenses in 2024, and the persistent violence in Ariana and Manouba, which recorded 3 crimes each in 2025. This urban concentration of violence is driven by a distinct set of compounding structural factors:

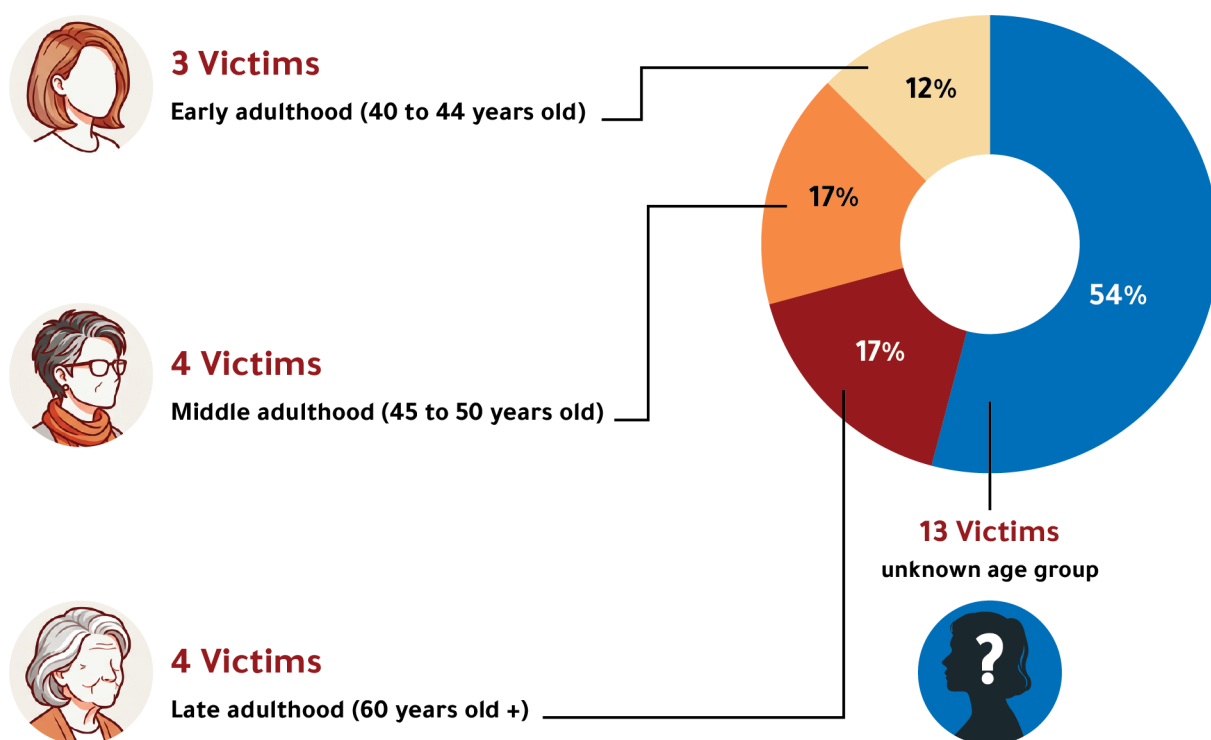
- **Population Density and Unchecked Urbanization:** These metropolitan hubs are ringed by expanding belts of poverty, fueled by internal migration and rural-to-urban displacement. Families relocating to the fringes of the capital or coastal cities are hit by substandard housing conditions and an astronomical cost of living—compounding factors that systematically heighten both domestic and social volatility/ violence.
- **Erosion of traditional communal bonds :** Unlike inland communities, where traditional social structures can sometimes exercise oversight and intervene to de-escalate conflicts, major urban centers are characterized by profound social alienation. In these environments, the lack of community cohesion and the absence of intervention by neighbors or extended kin allow domestic abuse to escalate unchecked into lethal violence.
- **Female Autonomy as a Trigger for Violence:** In coastal and metropolitan regions, women's workforce integration and subsequent financial independence are frequently weaponized by fragile patriarchal mindsets, which perceive this autonomy as a direct threat to male hegemony within the household. Consequently, a woman's refusal to tolerate abuse or her decision to seek a divorce often acts as the primary catalyst for the husband to commit the crime.

In summary, a stark dichotomy emerges between the two regions: in the inland territories, systemic poverty, chronic underdevelopment, and a critical deficit of specialized care centers for survivors foster an environment of hidden, insulated violence that ultimately ends in femicide under a veil of societal silence. Conversely, in the coastal zones and metropolitan centers, urban congestion, housing crises, and rapid social shifts (notably the friction stemming from shifting gender roles) act as the primary catalysts, triggering explosive, overt outbursts of violence that culminate in highly public femicides.

4. Distribution of Crimes by Victim Age Demographics

Based on the recorded case profiles—consisting of 11 victims whose ages were verified and 13 whose ages remain unknown—the demographic breakdown reveals the following insights:

Unidentified Age Cohort (The Largest Statistical Segment): The ages of 13 victims could not be determined, constituting the highest single percentage within the dataset. This data deficit presents a distinct statistical hurdle. It stems primarily from the fact that preliminary media dispatches and initial security logs frequently omit age metrics due to incomplete identification protocols or missing identity documentation in the immediate aftermath of a crime.



The apparent absence of young women and adolescents from the tracked data does not imply that these age groups are unaffected; rather, it is masked by the fact that 13 victims remain completely unidentified by age. Crucially, among the verified cases, every single victim was aged 40 or older. This serves as a strong indicator that femicides within this specific cohort are intrinsically tied to long-term marital or domestic relationships that had been established for years. In these instances, lethal violence erupts after decades of compounding friction, deep-seated grievances, or severe financial strains.

Furthermore, the documentation of 4 victims in advanced old age highlights their extreme physical vulnerability and limited capacity for self-defense. The violence targeting this elderly cohort points to a specific manifestation of domestic abuse: every victim in this age bracket was a mother killed by her own son. Case records indicate that several of these perpetrators had prior criminal records or histories of substance abuse.

Comparative Matrix: Victim Age Distribution (2024 vs. 2025)

Age Bracket	2024	2025	Trend Direction and Statistical Shift
25 to 35 years old	13%	0%	Total drop (no cases reported in this category)
36 to 45 years old	39%	16.7% (4 victims)	Sharp decline by more than half compared to last year
46 to 60 years old	18%	12.5% (3 victims)	Slight decrease, while the phenomenon persists in this category
Over 60 years old	4%	16.7% (4 victims)	Record and dangerous increase , with the rate nearly quadrupling
Unidentified age	26%	54.2% (13 victims)	Significant increase in demographically undocumented cases

Key Insights from the Comparative Matrix:

1. Alarmingly Steep Surge in the Targeting of Elderly Women (Ages 60+)

The targeting of older women represents a dramatic statistical leap, soaring from just 4% in 2024 to 16.7% in 2025. This escalation exposes a disturbing, emergent pattern of lethal gender-based violence in Tunisia. Unlike conventional femicides, the murder of elderly women is frequently driven by structural factors entirely distinct from traditional marital conflicts. Instead, it is heavily correlated with acute familial disputes over inheritance, violent assaults motivated by theft, or severe domestic abuse perpetrated by sons suffering from behavioral disorders or substance addictions—all of whom deliberately exploit the absolute physical vulnerability and social isolation of the victim.

2. Contraction within the Youth (Ages 25–35) and Early Adulthood Cohorts

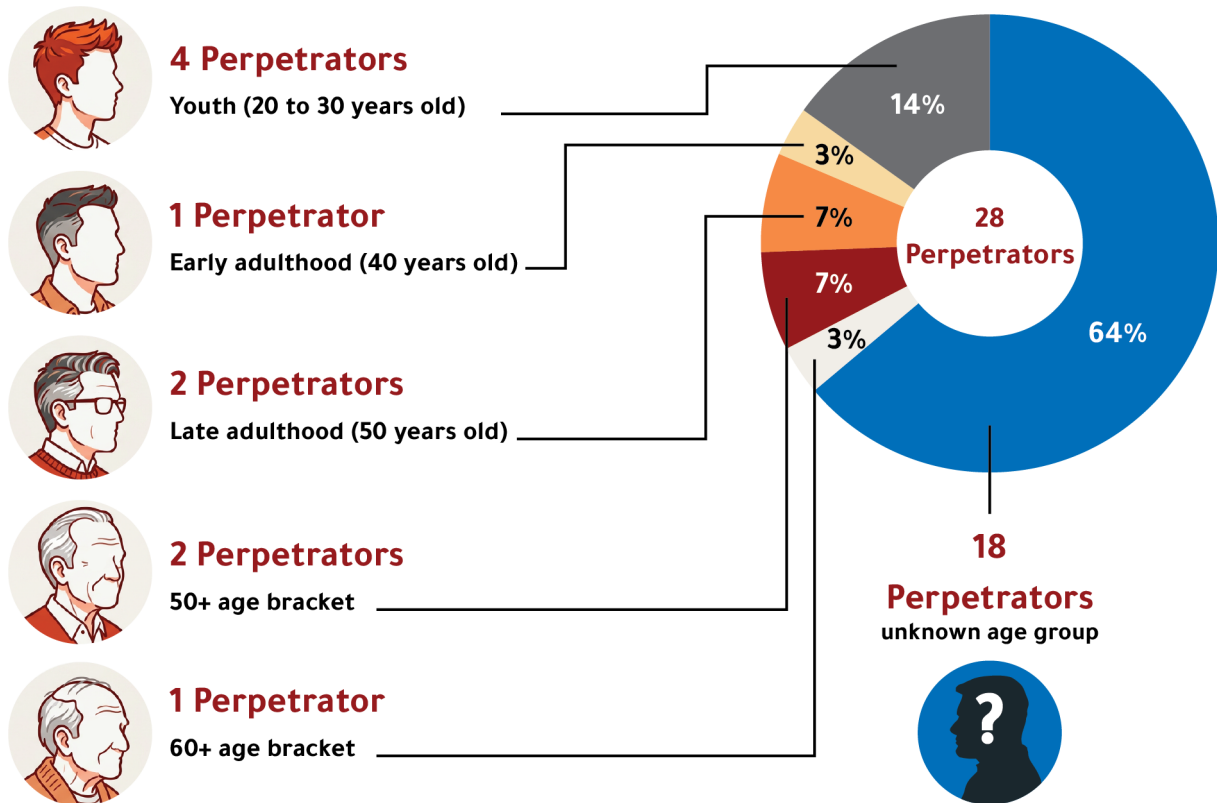
The proportion of victims within the 36–45 age bracket experienced a sharp contraction, dropping from a peak of 39% in 2024 to 16.7% in 2025. Concurrently, the younger demographic vanished entirely from the verified data pool (standing at 0%). This shift could point to two divergent realities: it may indicate the relative success of early reporting and awareness mechanisms among a younger generation that is more conscious of human rights and better equipped to exit violent environments; alternatively, it may stem from a systemic documentation flaw caused by the massive surge in “unidentified age” profiles.

3. The Dilemma of Unidentified Age Data (54.2% in 2025)

The percentage of victims whose ages went unrecorded more than doubled, skyrocketing from 26% in 2024 to a staggering 54.2% in 2025. This presents a severe diagnostic barrier for data analysts and civil society—which currently stands as the sole entity compiling and publishing statistics on femicide in Tunisia. This steep information deficit exposes a profound lack of precision in media reporting. It underscores an urgent, immediate need to upgrade data-monitoring mechanisms and fact-checking protocols at the point of initial reporting to safeguard the integrity of annual findings and prevent the erasure of vital demographic metrics.



5. Distribution of Crimes by Perpetrator Age Demographics



A cross-analysis and synthesis of this dataset highlights the following core dynamics:

1. The “Youthful Perpetrator vs. Mature/Elderly Victim” Paradox

The most striking insight revealed through the cross-analysis of this data is the presence of 4 youthful perpetrators (aged 20 to 30), contrasted against a 2025 victim registry that is entirely devoid of young women and concentrated heavily in the over-40 and over-60 demographics. This profound disparity reinforces two primary hypotheses:

- **Filial Violence (Violence by Sons Against Mothers):** In correlation with the sharp increase in elderly victims (ages 60 and above), young perpetrators in their twenties or thirties are frequently the sons or grandsons of the deceased. Within this specific paradigm, the lethal escalation is heavily driven by financial extortion, substance addiction, or severe psychiatric disorders.
- **Prevalence of domestic femicide and targeting of older women:** The age gap between perpetrators and victims underscores that 2025 femicides primarily occurred within the domestic sphere. Older women proved particularly susceptible to fatal violence, driven by the interplay of vulnerability and asymmetric family power structures.

2. Perpetrators in Mature Adulthood (Ages 40 and 50)

Recording 3 perpetrators within this age bracket correlates closely with the primary target demographic of the victims (ages 45 to 60). This alignment points to a persistent pattern of long-term, conventional intimate partner violence. In these scenarios, cumulative abuse that has built up over decades reaches a boiling point, culminating in homicide during periods of acute economic strain or severe psychological distress.

3. Perpetrators in Advanced Age (Ages 60 and Above)

While criminal tendencies persist into old age, the statistical incidence within this late-stage demographic remains remarkably low.

4. Statistical opacity phenomenon (18 Unidentified Profiles)

The proportion of perpetrators with unrecorded ages reached a staggering 64%, completely eclipsing even the high percentage of unidentified victims (54%). From a legal and procedural standpoint, this data deficit is driven by several critical factors: the immediate flight of perpetrators to evade arrest, instances where offenders commit suicide immediately after the crime, or the deliberate withholding of personal identifying data by investigative authorities pending the conclusion of judicial inquiries.

Comparative Matrix: Perpetrator Age Distribution (2024 vs. 2025)

Offender Age Bracket	Number of Crimes 2024	Number of Crimes 2025	Trend Direction and Statistical Shift
20s (20–29 years old)	3	4	The 20–29 age group continued to be represented among identified perpetrators, with a slight increase in the number of recorded cases.
30s (30–39 years old)	9	1	Sharp numerical decrease, potentially due to non-documentation
40s (40–49 years old)	5	2	Numerical decline with persistent presence
50s (50–59 years old)	5	2	Numerical decline with persistent presence
60s and above (60+ years old)	1	1	Relative stability
Age Unspecified	7	18	Record high in opacity (64%)

1. Confirmation of the 2024 Baseline (Link Between Femicide and the Institution of Marriage)

In 2024, perpetrators in their forties, fifties, and sixties accounted for a commanding 79% of all verified cases (15 out of 19 offenders). This dataset reinforces the baseline thesis that lethal violence is heavily sustained by the compounding friction of long-term marital disputes, alongside highly contentious divorce proceedings, alimony battles, and child custody conflicts that ultimately trigger fatal escalations among mature adults.

2. Structural Imbalance in 2025 and the Surge in “Youth-Perpetrated Violence”

In stark contrast to 2024—which recorded only a single offender in his twenties—the year 2025 witnessed a sharp uptick, with 3 perpetrators emerging from this youthful cohort. This demographic shift directly mirrors a rise in severe ascendant violence (crimes committed by descendants against their parents or elders). This specifically illuminates the spike in offenses targeting mothers, which in turn explains the parallel surge in elderly victims over the age of 60 in 2025—a phenomenon deeply intertwined with substance addiction or financial extortion.

3. The Dilemma of Data Deficits (A 64% Rate of Unidentified Profiles in 2025)

The alarming surge in perpetrators with unrecorded ages in 2025 (skyrocketing to 18 cases compared to just 7 in 2024) effectively obscures a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon. This statistical opacity is driven by specific criminological realities, most notably the high incidence of perpetrators fleeing the scene to evade arrest. Consequently, both media outlets and civil society organizations, such as the Aswat Nissa association, exercise extreme caution—withholding the personal data of suspects until judicial investigations are finalized or subsequent investigative journalism brings these metrics to light.

6. Distribution of Crimes by Victim Marital Status

Victims included 14 married, 3 single, and 3 divorced women, along with 6 whose marital status was not specified.

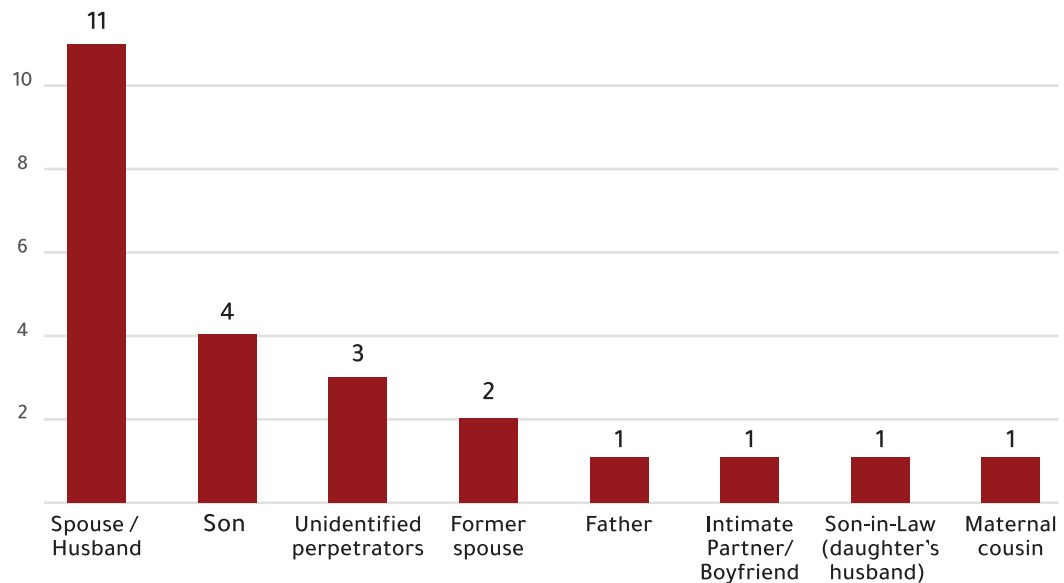
Distribution of Crimes by Victim Marital Status

Victim (s)	Number of cases	Rate	Social and Criminological Significance
Married Women	14	53.8%	More than half the victims: Proves that marriage is a hotbed for femicide.
Divorced Women	3	11.5%	Underscores ongoing violence, threats, and revenge following separation. Divorce does not end violence against women; on the contrary, it leaves them in a state of heightened risk.
Single / unmarried Women	3	11.5%	Single women and young girls are murdered by family members or non-marital intimate partners.
Status Unknown	6	23.2%	Absence of clear reporting in initial police files and media outlets.

Married women constitute the largest single demographic subjected to gender-based violence and its most extreme manifestation—femicide. This reality underscores the profoundly unequal power dynamics within marriages, where the wife is systematically relegated to a subordinate position, subject to a husband’s control and dominance that is heavily enabled by entrenched patriarchal norms. This high statistical incidence stems directly from the fact that the principal perpetrator in the vast majority of documented crimes is the husband.

Male dominance, control, and coercion do not simply dissipate with the breakdown of the marital relationship. Instead, violence frequently takes a lethal turn during the divorce phase—specifically when legal separation proceedings are initiated or when the wife expresses a desire to dissolve the marriage. In criminological risk-assessment frameworks, this transitional period constitutes an imminent threat to women’s lives and stands as a critical danger indicator that demands immediate, proactive protection measures.

7. Distribution of Crimes by Perpetrator-Victim Relationship



Analytical Findings:

1. The Dominance of Intimate Partner Violence (nearly 65%):

This dataset provides irrefutable empirical evidence that the intimate domestic sphere, rather than public spaces or the streets, presents the most critical threat to women's lives. The fact that the victim toll includes 14 married women highlights a deeply concerning phenomenon: severe abuse escalates silently behind closed doors over decades. This institutional tracking aligns with our earlier demographic findings, where the majority of victims were concentrated in their forties and fifties. Crucially, it exposes systemic failures within state protective frameworks (specifically law enforcement and judicial mechanisms) which consistently fail to intervene proactively before a lethal escalation occurs.

By synthesizing the categories of married and divorced victims ($14 + 3 = 17$ victims), the data reveals that 65.3% of all tracked femicides were perpetrated within an active or dissolved marital relationship. This metric perfectly mirrors our 2024 baseline data, which identified a statistical peak among perpetrators in their forties and fifties (accounting for 14 offenders between the ages of 40 and 59). Because this age group represents the most family-stabilized demographic, it confirms that the underlying drivers of femicide are systematically fueled by the chronic deterioration of the marital relationship, or by high-stakes litigation surrounding alimony, financial maintenance, and child custody during divorce proceedings.

2. The Household as the Primary Zone of Critical Danger (54.1%): The Lethal Domestic Sphere

Crimes perpetrated by husbands and former husbands (11 + 2 = 13 offenses) constitute more than half of the total recorded homicides. This statistical threshold directly explains our preceding demographic findings, which showed that married women overwhelmingly dominate the victim registry.

Furthermore, it clarifies why the age profiles of perpetrators in 2025 were heavily concentrated in their forties and fifties (ages 40 and above). This life stage is typically where deep-seated conflicts over household finances, obsessive jealousy, or contentious divorce, alimony, and child custody battles reach a boiling point, culminating in lethal violence.

The murder of women within their homes or private spaces is formally categorized under the criminological framework of “crime behind closed doors.” Intimate partner femicide perpetrated by a current or former spouse stands at the forefront of this crisis, accounting for 45.8% of cases—a figure that climbs to a staggering 54.1% when including ex-husbands. This reality heavily reinforces the data patterns documented in the 2024 annual records, the 2022 National Survey conducted by the National Institute of Statistics (INS), and ongoing metrics from the state-run domestic abuse hotline (“The Green Line”) and civil society organizations. This persistent trend is driven by deeply entrenched structural factors:

- **The Privacy of the Domestic Sphere as a Facilitator of Coercive Control:** The home provides an isolated, private environment that shields the abusive spouse from public accountability and social oversight. This total isolation drastically undermines a victim’s ability to summon emergency assistance and paralyzes any immediate external intervention at the critical moment the crime is initiated.
- **The Cumulative and Escalating Trajectory of Intimate Partner Violence:** These lethal acts are rarely isolated or spontaneous incidents; rather, they represent the absolute zenith of a documented “cycle of domestic violence.” This trajectory typically initiates with verbal aggression, escalates into physical battery, and is continuously sustained by the victim’s enforced silence, victim-blaming, or the withdrawal of prior legal complaints out of pressure to maintain family cohesion—until it reaches its fatal tipping point.
- **The Intersection of Femicide with Patriarchal Entitlement and Ownership Mindsets:** The murder of wives and former spouses remains deeply tethered to deeply ingrained patriarchal structures, where perpetrators view their partners as personal property. Consequently, any attempt by the woman to assert bodily



autonomy, initiate divorce proceedings, or manifest financial independence is perceived by the perpetrator as an existential threat to his masculine authority and institutional dominance. Homicide is thus deployed as the ultimate tool to re-establish total and permanent control.

- **Economic Pressure Points as Catalysts for Fatal Escalations:** The notable concentration of these offenses during specific seasonal peaks—namely October (the financial strain of the academic back-to-school period) and June (compounding examination and summer expenditures)—demonstrates that acute economic crises within Tunisian households function as systemic triggers. These severe financial stressors rapidly accelerate latent domestic abuse into lethal, bloody violence.

For single (unmarried) victims, the recorded data reveals **two distinct** criminological paradigms:

- **Family-related crimes** manifesting in the murder of descendants by ascendants (e.g., a father killing his daughter, as recorded in one documented case.
- **Intimate Partner Violence within Non-Marital Relationships:** These offenses are perpetrated by men against their fiancées or romantic partners. The lethal escalation is typically triggered when the victim rejects the continuation of the relationship, refuses intimacy, or when the perpetrator exhibits acute patterns of obsessive jealousy and pathological fixation.
- **Filial Violence (Violence by Sons Against Mothers) :** The documentation of 4 homicides perpetrated by sons against their mothers serves as the critical sociological key linking two distinct phenomena previously identified in the 2025 dataset. First, it correlates directly with the spike in elderly victims (ages 60 and above), who are systematically targeted due to their heightened physical vulnerability. Second, it accounts for the emergence of perpetrators in their twenties. Within the Tunisian context, this lethal manifestation of youth violence against mothers is systematically driven by financial extortion, severe substance abuse (narcotics and alcohol), or untreated, acute psychiatric disorders.

3. Collateral and Extended Familial Violence (Violence by In-Laws and Relatives)

The involvement of external family actors—specifically fathers, sons-in-law, and maternal cousins, each accounting for a single recorded offense—demonstrates that gender-based violence targeting women is not strictly confined to the intimate partner. Instead, it expands horizontally to encompass the broader apparatus of patriarchal authority and “male dominance” enforced within the extended family network.

4. Post-Separation Intimate Partner Violence

The registration of 2 homicides perpetrated by former husbands exposes a severe psychological and security dynamic: legal or de facto separation does not automatically neutralize the threat of lethal violence against women. On the contrary, it frequently elevates the victim to a state of extreme, acute vulnerability that demands immediate protection.

Protracted, highly adversarial legal battles within the court system over alimony, housing allowances, and child custody often transform the ex-husband into a calculating, stalker-like aggressor. In fact, the perpetrator perceives the murder of his former wife as a form of ultimate personal retribution—punishing her either for imposing ongoing financial obligations upon him or for legally detaching him from his children.



8. Methods of Femicide and Weapons Deployed

Compared to 2024, the methods of homicide diversified numerically to include slaughter, burning (immolation), extreme violence, strangulation, eye gouging, pushing, and stabbing.

In the vast majority of cases, edged or sharp instruments were utilized, with the knife remaining the primary weapon. The data reveals highly aggravated patterns, including two distinct cases of throat-slitting—one of which tragically resulted in the dual slaughter of both the wife and her son. Additionally, the dataset tracks one case involving multiple knife stabbings accompanied by an attempted throat-slitting, alongside 6 distinct cases where lethal execution was carried out purely via knife stabbings.

Across both the 2024 and 2025 statistical cycles, knives remain the dominant and primary instrument of fatal violence.

Killings were also committed using a concrete building block (cinder block) followed by multiple knife stabs. Two victims were strangled (a method also observed in 2024), while another suffered extreme physical abuse prior to strangulation. Dousing the body in gasoline to burn the victim and cover up the crime occurred in three cases—one of which also involved a sharp weapon. Unlike 2024, when immolation was rare, the use of fire spiked dramatically this year.

The dataset also records an unprecedented act of severe physical mutilation, wherein the perpetrator restrained the victim by her hair, dragged her, and surgically gouged out her eyes using a sharp instrument—an extreme method entirely absent from the 2024 annual report. Finally, one case involved fatal defenestration/trauma by pushing the victim down a flight of stairs, while the specific mechanics of execution remained unspecified or unrecorded in 3 tracked offenses.

Method & Means	Number of Crimes	Percentage (%)	Observations
Knife Stabbing (Sharp Weapons)	6	33%	The knife is the dominant and most readily accessible tool.
Immolation / Burning (Gasoline Dousing / Stabbing followed by Burning)	3	16.7%	A tactic aimed at concealing crime scene evidence and inflicting prolonged suffering.
Throat-Slitting / Slaughter (or Stabbing with Attempted Slaughter)	3	16.7%	Two full throat-slitting cases (one involving a son) and one attempted throat-slitting after stabbing with a sharp object.
Strangulation (Direct strangulation / Severe physical abuse prior to strangulation)	3	16.7%	Indicates an intent to exert immediate physical dominance and stifle the victim's voice.
Stabbing with blunt and sharp instruments	1	5.6%	Reflects a state of hysteria, severe agitation, and weaponizing nearby objects.
Eye gouging with a sharp weapon after brutal hair-pulling and restraint	1	5.6%	Calculated brutality aimed at inflicting sadistic revenge and mutilating the victim
Pushing down the stairs	1	5.6%	Used primarily against elderly victims or to disguise the homicide as an accident.
Unspecified methods	3	16.7%	

Dominance of Bladed Weapons & Ease of Access

The overwhelming deployment of knives across the majority of documented offenses—spanning sharp-force stabbings, throat-slitting, and ocular mutilation—strongly reinforces the baseline thesis that the domestic sphere (the home) serves as the primary theater of crime. As an omnipresent household and kitchen utility, the knife is immediately accessible to the perpetrator at the volatile onset of physical violence. This structural availability indicates that these femicides are either executed spontaneously during a state of hysterical rage or calculated in advance using ordinary tools that deliberately evade suspicion.

The Phenomenon of “Overkill” in Gender-Based Femicide:

The documentation of extreme acts (such as ocular gouging, throat-slitting, immolation via gasoline, and inflicting multiple stabbings following blunt-force trauma with a cinder block) constitutes a definitive indicator in forensic psychology of profound negative emotional charging (acute rage, pathological jealousy, or a desire for absolute retribution). In these scenarios, the perpetrator’s intent transcends the termination of life; the objective shifts toward the total erasure of the victim’s identity, physical desecration, and severe punitive mutilation both pre- and post-mortem. This pattern remains a defining, systemic characteristic of gender-based femicide.

Burning and strangulation: Methods of control and evidence destruction

- **Immolation (3 Cases):** Criminologically classified as one of the most brutal mechanisms of lethal execution, burning is weaponized by the perpetrator either as an expression of extreme, sadistic punishment or as a desperate attempt at forensic spoliation—destroying physical evidence and obliterating the features of the corpse within the confines of the home.
- **Strangulation (3 Cases):** The recurrence of fatal strangulation directly reflects a highly intimate or proximal relationship (a husband or a son). Forensic dynamics dictate that strangulation requires direct, sustained physical confrontation and maximum proximity, allowing the aggressor to forcefully suppress the victim’s breathing and deliberately paralyze any capacity to summon external emergency assistance from neighbors.

Pushing Down Stairs: Attempting Impunity

The instance of pushing a victim down a flight of stairs represents a highly calculated, opportunistic methodology. In these scenarios, the perpetrator attempts to construct a fabricated narrative portraying the fatality as an accidental slip or fall to evade criminal liability. This deceptive strategy is consistently dismantled by Tunisian forensic medical reports through the meticulous cross-examination of bruising patterns and fall trajectories.

Spillover of Violence to Children: Wife and Son Slaughtered

The slaughter of a child alongside their mother demonstrates that the perpetrator's criminal frenzy frequently expands to eliminate potential witnesses or to inflict the ultimate form of psychological retribution. By targeting the victim's most profound emotional bond (her children), the perpetrator seeks an act of ultimate domestic revenge.

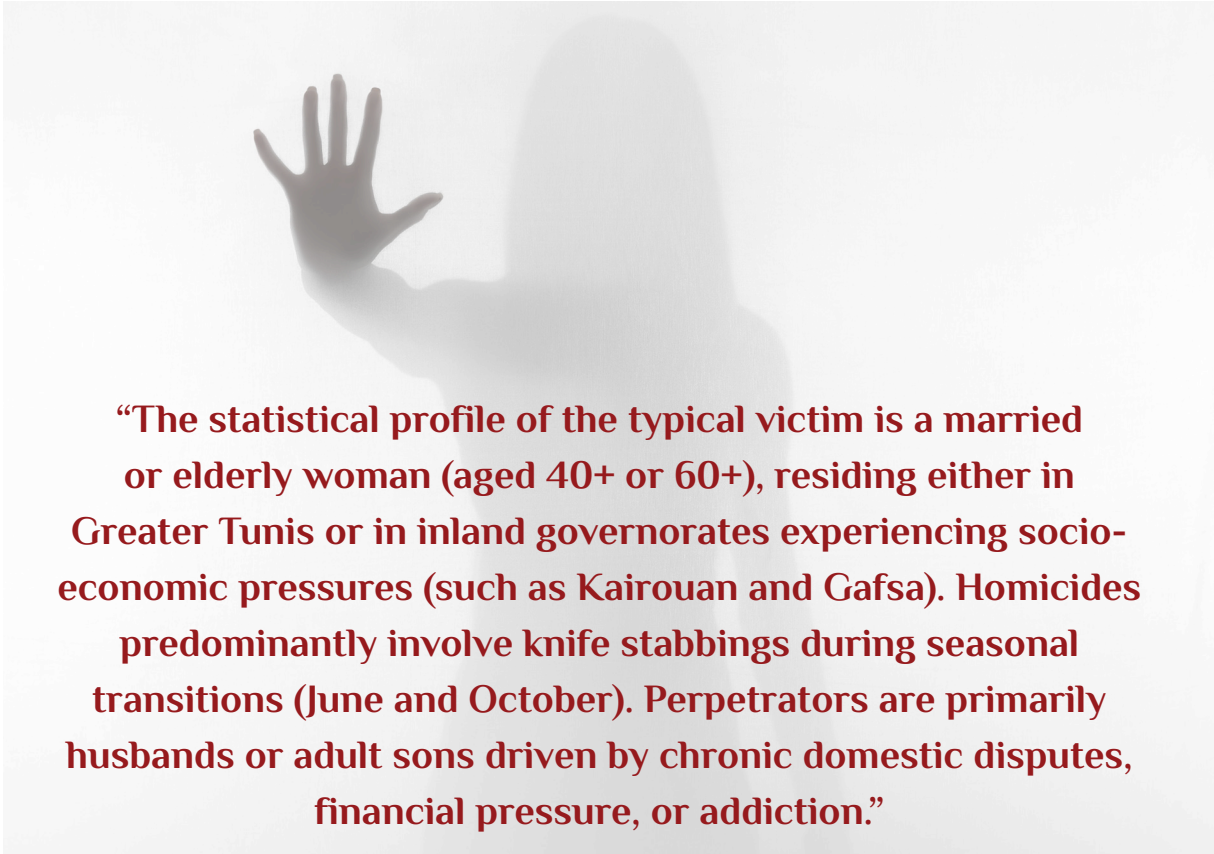
Gender-based femicide is fundamentally underpinned by sadistic behavioral dynamics, wherein the perpetrator deliberately inflicts severe physical or psychological agony upon the victim to derive a sense of gratification, relief, or total subjugation. This punitive framework prioritizes protracted torture over immediate termination of life. Rather than employing rapid methods (such as firearms), the perpetrator purposefully selects slower, agonising mechanisms—such as progressive immolation, gradual strangulation, or severe physical mutilation and throat-slitting—to witness the prolonged suffering of the victim.



We also observe that the phenomenon of overkill—defined as the application of excessive, lethal force far exceeding the biological threshold required to end life—is highly prevalent. Examples include incapacitating a victim with a blunt object (a cinder block) followed by multiple sharp-force stabbings, or performing ocular gouging. This reveals a pathological desire for retribution and severe pre-mortem bodily desecration. Furthermore, it operates as the ultimate assertion of absolute dominance; the aggressor interprets the victim’s physical helplessness, pleas, and distress as concrete validation of his total authority, directly compensating for an internalized sense of inadequacy or structural emasculation.

The deployment of these extreme punitive measures frequently targets the total erasure of the victim’s identity. Dousing the body with gasoline for immolation or intentionally disfiguring the face reflects a sadistic drive to obliterate the victim’s physical features, serving as an ultimate, permanent punishment that extends even beyond biological death.

Femicide, as a form of violence systematically predicated on gender, is invariably driven by an excessive, retributive desire entirely devoid of humane impulse. The perpetrator derives a distinct sense of gratification from systematically dismantling the victim’s dignity and physically breaking her body before terminating her life.



“The statistical profile of the typical victim is a married or elderly woman (aged 40+ or 60+), residing either in Greater Tunis or in inland governorates experiencing socio-economic pressures (such as Kairouan and Gafsa). Homicides predominantly involve knife stabbings during seasonal transitions (June and October). Perpetrators are primarily husbands or adult sons driven by chronic domestic disputes, financial pressure, or addiction.”

V. Report Limitations

The absolute reliance on broadcast, digital, and print media as the primary matrix for aggregating statistical data on femicide is a necessary, default strategy forced upon the “Aswat Nissa” association due to the critical absence of a centralized, updated, and official database. However, this media-monitoring methodology introduces severe structural deficiencies and constraints that inherently impact the precision of these monitoring reports.

Challenges and limitations faced by the association in collecting and analyzing 2024 and 2025 data

1. The Dilemma of Unspecified Data and Demographic Opacity

The 2025 dataset reveals that 54.2% of victims and 72% of perpetrators remained categorized under “unspecified age,” alongside an absolute lack of marital status documentation for 6 victims. This systemic absence of vital statistics leaves the tracking process severely fragmented (mutilated data). This gap occurs because media outlets treat the crime as an immediate, isolated sensationalist incident (fait divers), reporting it immediately without subsequent investigative follow-ups. Consequently, media channels consistently fail to update demographic profiles once preliminary security investigations are finalized.

2. The Buzz Economy over Feminist Criminological Analysis

Media coverage routinely prioritizes shock value over objective criminological and gender-focused scrutiny. Outlets disproportionately amplify crimes characterized by exceptionally gruesome execution methods—such as ocular gouging, throat-slitting, or immolation via gasoline—solely to optimize audience traction and digital engagement (clickbait/buzz).

3. Neglect of the sociological background

Media coverage reduces perpetrators to ‘criminals’ or ‘mentally unstable,’ failing to dissect the structural roots of violence anchored in patriarchy and gender-based inequality.

4. The Lack of judicial tracking

In the overwhelming majority of documented femicides, the ultimate legal trajectory of the perpetrator remains entirely untrackable. Journalistic interest abruptly terminates at the immediate post-arrest phase, typically concluding with standard formulas like “the suspect has been apprehended” or “the examining magistrate has assumed jurisdiction over the file.” Consequently, civil society reports are systematically deprived of critical long-term metrics, such as definitive judicial sentences, verified immediate suicide rates among perpetrators, fugitives evading justice, or those voluntarily surrendering to law enforcement.

5. Geographical Disparities and Media Centralization (Urban Bias in Reporting)

The stark overrepresentation of metropolitan metrics at the expense of inland regions stems from a structural reality: Tunisian media outlets and their correspondents are heavily concentrated within the Greater Tunis area and coastal cities. This imbalance creates an inherent observation bias, whereby a femicide committed in Ariana or Manouba receives extensive media coverage, while a parallel crime occurring deep within a rural area or an isolated village in the inland region (such as Kasserine or Sidi Bouzid) is completely obscured. This journalistic neglect systematically creates an underreporting deficit, causing interior statistics to appear artificially lower than reality.

6. The Normalization of Violence and the Pathological Humanization of the Perpetrator

Numerous media narratives consistently fall into the trap of rationalizing and mitigating the crime by adopting phrases such as: “he killed her out of jealousy,” “due to acute family disputes,” or “in a fit of unmediated rage.” This linguistic framing actively strips the crime of its structural, gender-based context, downgrading a systematic femicide to an unfortunate “domestic dispute.” Consequently, it misrepresents the perpetrator as a sympathetic victim of his own psychological or situational circumstances.

VI. Recommendations

At the State Level

- Adopt a national strategy against femicide.
- Evaluate public violence prevention policies in combating all forms of violence, specifically femicide, via the National Observatory for the Prevention of Violence Against Women.
- Codify femicide as a standalone offense in the Penal Code.
- Integrate psychological violence/dominance (l'emprise) and coercive control (le contrôle coercitif) into criminal law.
- Strengthen protection mechanisms set forth in Organic Law No. 2017-58.
- Sustain legal awareness efforts regarding violence against women, particularly with respect to Law No. 2017-58.
- Institute mandatory risk assessment protocols for all frontline professionals.
- Train journalists and media professionals on objective and ethical femicide reporting.
- Provide effective psychological support for children and witnesses to femicide offenses .
- Equip regional coordination committees for local femicide crisis management.
- Provide psychological, legal, financial, and social assistance to the children of victims, as well as children of the perpetrator residing with the victim.
- Launch annual national awareness campaigns specifically focused on femicide.
- Intensify public outreach regarding protection mechanisms available to women victims of violence.
- Audit existing victim protection infrastructures to evaluate and optimize their operational efficiency.
- Strengthen the fight against violence against women by adopting tangible, high-impact measures in prevention, protection, and judicial prosecution as stipulated in Law No. 2017-58 to reduce femicide rates.
- Educate women on key risk indicators that may escalate to femicide, alongside informing them of available legal recourse and options.

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- ➔ Launch a cooperation protocol between the National Observatory for the Prevention of Violence Against Women, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Justice regarding unified data collection on femicide.
 - ➔ Train children, youth, and educators and share awareness to dismantle gender stereotypes, eradicate discrimination, and eliminate gender-based violence.
 - ➔ Adopt a mandatory standardized risk assessment scale by specialized police units and family court judges to evaluate danger levels upon receiving complaints or protection requests, enabling immediate, tailored legal interventions.
 - ➔ Encourage media outlets to cover femicide accurately and impartially, publishing objective reports aimed at educating the public on the severity and impact of violence.
 - ➔ Accelerate legal proceedings for victims of gender-based violence—specifically penal trials—while ensuring the rapid execution and enforcement of court rulings.

At the Civil Society Level

- ➔ Standardize civil society data collection to build a unified database and statistical system for tracking femicides.
- ➔ Form international and regional partnerships with anti-femicide observatories to integrate comparative best practices.
- ➔ Conduct field research with victims' families to document their trajectories and systemic gaps.
- ➔ Pursue strategic litigation in femicide cases to impact jurisprudence.
- ➔ Partner officially with forensic medicine units to access accurate data on lethal gender-based violence.
- ➔ Launch a national civil society observatory dedicated to tracking femicide.

