



UNFPA in Georgia

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ANNEX II:

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Research on Menstrual Poverty in Georgia

BACKGROUND

UNFPA is the lead United Nations agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is intended, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled. The UNFPA Strategic Plan for 2026-2029 articulates the organization's response to a complex global environment, providing a roadmap for resilience and renewal. It is designed to accelerate the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This mandate is pursued through a focus on four interconnected outcomes: ending the unmet need for family planning; ending preventable maternal deaths; ending gender-based violence and harmful practices; and adapting to demographic change through evidence and rights-based policies.

The UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality (UNJP4GE), funded by the Government of Sweden, is jointly implemented by three UN agencies: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). UNFPA recognizes menstrual health as an essential component of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and has actively supported awareness-raising and programming on this issue globally and in Georgia. Menstrual poverty is a deeply gendered phenomenon, rooted in structural gender inequalities, harmful social norms, and stigma surrounding menstruation, it undermines dignity and health, and constrains their ability to participate fully in education, work, and social and public life.

Available monitoring data and national reports indicate important gaps in schools, with rural and marginalized areas frequently lacking facilities and management systems adequate for menstrual hygiene management (MHM). These gaps constrain attendance and participation of girls and limit community-level awareness and practice of safe MHM¹.

At the same time, macroeconomic changes in Georgia over recent years — including periods of elevated inflation — have affected household purchasing power and the real cost of consumer goods, including hygiene products².

Finally, fiscal policy choices such as VAT treatment and excise rules shape prices at import and retail stages. International experience shows that removing VAT or otherwise exempting menstrual products can reduce prices and improve affordability.

DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

To this end, within the framework of the UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality (UNJP4GE), funded by the Government of Sweden the UNFPA Country Office Georgia is launching a new, evidence-based analytical study on menstrual poverty in Georgia to quantify its scale and key structural drivers.

¹ [The situation of water, sanitation and hygiene in schools](#)

² [Consumer Price Index \(Inflation\) - National Statistics Office of Georgia](#)

For this purpose the UNFPA office in Georgia, seeks a supplier to produce an evidence-based, policy-relevant analytical report that quantifies the drivers and scale of menstrual poverty in Georgia and provides practical recommendations for policy, budgetary, programmatic and advocacy responses, through combining national fiscal analysis (including reference to the Tax Code and the practicalities of customs/VAT rules) with international policy comparison.

The research will specifically:

- (a) estimate the budgetary and price impacts of exempting menstrual hygiene products from VAT and other taxes at import and retail;
- (b) assess accessibility and availability of school physician and nurse's office for girls and women;
- (c) analyse the influence of inflation on hygiene product prices over the last five years; and
- (d) present international practices and policy options based on 3–4 country case studies.

The research will examine current household expenditure on commonly used menstrual hygiene products in Georgia and assess how these costs are influenced by existing VAT and import duty regulations. It will model potential changes in retail prices if the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Health decide to include menstrual hygiene products in the list of VAT-exempt goods³ and will estimate the corresponding impact on the state budget under realistic import and consumption scenarios. The study will also assess the availability, condition, and accessibility of physician and nurse's offices in schools, including accessibility for persons with disabilities, and will analyse how existing infrastructure conditions affect menstrual hygiene management practices and girls' school attendance.

In parallel, the research will track changes in the prices of typical menstrual products over the past five years and determine the extent to which these changes are driven by general inflation versus product-specific supply and market factors. Finally, the study will review international practices by analysing policy options and implementation pathways used in comparable countries to improve affordability and access to menstrual products, such as VAT exemptions, free provision in schools, and subsidized programmes, and will assess which of these approaches are feasible within the Georgian fiscal and administrative context.

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES

The research on Menstrual Poverty in Georgia will have the following characteristics:

- The study will be an analytical, policy-oriented research combining fiscal analysis, economic assessment, institutional review, and international comparative analysis, designed to generate evidence directly relevant for policy, budgetary, and programmatic decision-making in Georgia.
- The research will be based primarily on secondary data and desk-based analysis, drawing on national legal and fiscal frameworks, administrative data, official statistics, and published reports, including the Tax Code of Georgia, VAT and customs regulations, Geostat macroeconomic and CPI data, Public Defender and Government reports (including the Ministry of Finance of Georgia, Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia), and UNFPA, MICS, and other relevant national and international sources.
- A comprehensive fiscal and cost-modelling approach will be applied to analyse the value chain of commonly used menstrual hygiene products imported and sold in Georgia, including import structures, margins, and existing VAT and tax treatment.
- A transparent and reproducible spreadsheet-based model will be developed to simulate alternative policy scenarios, including full and partial VAT exemption of menstrual hygiene

³ <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5065282?publication=0>

products at import and retail stages, and to estimate potential retail price changes under each scenario.

- The study will estimate the fiscal impact of alternative VAT and tax exemption scenarios on the state budget, using recent import volumes and customs data or the best available proxies, and will assess distributional effects across population groups, including urban and rural households.
- An analysis of household expenditure and affordability of menstrual hygiene products will be conducted by examining retail price trends over the past five years and assessing the extent to which price changes are driven by general inflation versus product-specific market factors.
- The research will include an assessment of the availability, condition, and accessibility of school physician and nurse's offices in public schools across Georgia, including accessibility for persons with disabilities, and will analyse how existing infrastructure conditions affect menstrual hygiene management practices and girls' school attendance.
- International comparative analysis will be conducted through the review of three to four country case studies representing different policy approaches to addressing menstrual poverty, such as VAT exemption or zero-rating, free provision of menstrual products in schools or public institutions, raw-material tax exemptions, and targeted subsidy programmes.
- The findings from fiscal modelling, price and inflation analysis, institutional assessment, and international comparison will be synthesized into a consolidated analytical report presenting feasible policy options for Georgia, including short-term, medium-term, and structural measures, with consideration of fiscal impact, administrative feasibility, equity implications, and monitoring indicators.

DELIVERABLES

The selected research organization will be responsible for the following deliveries:

- Inception Report (In Georgian)
- Fiscal, Price, and Inflation Analysis Package (In Georgian)
- Assessment of availability and accessibility of school physician and/or nurse offices (In Georgian)
- International Comparative Analysis (In Georgian)
- Final Consolidated Report and Policy Recommendations (In Georgian)
- Communication Report providing the concise analyses of all the domains of the research (In English and Georgian).

Duration and working schedule:

The selected research organization will start implementing the activities as outlined by the present ToR **from March 11, 2026, and will have to submit all the deliverables by May 15, 2026.**

The UNJP4GE project team will review and provide feedback on each deliverable within the standard review/approval period of 5–10 working days per submission, unless otherwise agreed.

UNFPA reserves the right to extend the deadline for the submission of all the deliverables if the delay is conditioned due to circumstances beyond the control of the research organization. The extension of the deadline will be communicated in writing between the parties.

ACTIVITIES

The selected research organization will be responsible for the following activities:

1. Inception and desk review

- (a) Rapid review of national legal/fiscal framework governing VAT, customs duties and exemptions; review of the Tax Code and any existing tariff/HS classifications relevant to menstrual products.
- (b) Review of national data on school physician and nurse's office, including Public Defender/ Government reports and UNFPA and MICS publications relevant to MHM.
- (c) Review of macroeconomic and price data (Geostat CPI and relevant indices) for the past five years for Georgia.
- (d) Rapid review of international policy interventions (select 3–4 countries that exemplify different approaches — e.g., VAT exemption, free provision in schools, raw material tax relief, or hybrid schemes). Use authoritative sources and peer-reviewed analysis where possible.

2. Cost analysis & fiscal modelling

- (a) Map the value chain for common menstrual products imported and sold in Georgia (importers, margins, current VAT and any excises).
- (b) Build a transparent, reproducible spreadsheet model that simulates retail price changes under alternative policy scenarios (e.g., 100% VAT exemption at import, partial exemption).
- (c) Using recent import volumes and customs data (or best available proxy), estimate the fiscal revenue loss to the state under each scenario.
- (d) Estimate distributional impacts: who benefits (households by income, urban/rural), and whether targeted mechanisms are required to reach the most vulnerable.

3. School physician and nurse's offices availability assessment: Conduct an assessment of school physician and nurse's offices in public schools. The assessment will include availability of the office and physician/ nurse, as well as accessibility of the space for Persons with Disabilities.

4. Inflation & price trend analysis: Compile retail price series (or proxy) for representative menstrual products over the past five years. Where product-level CPI series are unavailable, use market surveys, scanner data, and import price indices to reconstruct trends.

5. International comparative analysis: Select 3–4 country case studies based on differing policy models (for example: VAT removal/zero-rating; free provision in schools/public institutions; raw-material tax exemptions; targeted subsidy programmes). Provide a summary of implementation mechanisms, fiscal costs were published, successes, challenges, and relevance to Georgia. Use credible sources and, where possible, government or donor evaluations.

6. Synthesis and policy recommendations: Produce a consolidated report that integrates cost-modelling, price/inflation analysis, and international lessons to propose feasible policy options for Georgia. Recommendations should include immediate (short-term) measures, medium-term programmatic actions (e.g., school distribution programs) and fiscal pathways (VAT exemption design, procurement options, targeted subsidies). For each option include an assessment of fiscal impact, administrative feasibility, equity implications, and monitoring indicators.

INPUTS

It is recommended that the research is finalized in the 2nd quarter of 2026; therefore, the reasonable timeline of the deliverables will be suggested by the interested research organization, subject to negotiation from the side of the UNFPA.

UNFPA hereby reserves the right to select the research organization based on the best offer, but potentially introduce minor changes in the proposal upon subject to agreement with the organization.

The interested research organization will submit the following documents:

- Profile and Portfolio of the research organization and relevance to the Project.
- Portfolio of the research organization, demonstrating skills in research design and methods, including sampling and data collection via field surveys.
- Proposal of the research will include overall description of the research (purpose and methodology)
- Schedule of the activities/timeline of the deliverables to be implemented under the project.
- Resumes of the relevant personnel involved in the project.
- Budget associated with research.

MINIMUM SPECIFICATIONS

A research organization must:

- Be a legally-constituted company that can provide the requested services and have legal capacity to enter into a contract with UNFPA to perform in the country, or through an authorized representative.
- Have at least five (5) years of experience in research design and methods, including sampling and data collection.
- Have a portfolio or samples of previous work that demonstrate the company has conducted at least two (2) nationwide field surveys.
- Have established organizational structure with clear division of roles within the team and quality assurance process.

Team's qualifications (Please provide CVs demonstrating the following requirements):

A team leader with an advanced university degree (Master's level or higher) in social sciences, economics, public policy, public health, gender studies, or a related field; a minimum of seven (7) years of demonstrated experience in leading complex social research and policy-oriented analytical studies, with strong expertise in quantitative research design, sampling, and data analysis. Proven experience as a Project/Team Leader on at least three (3) relevant assignments, including studies related to gender equality, social protection, fiscal or price analysis, or sexual and reproductive health and rights. Fluency in written and spoken Georgian and English is required. Experience in translating research findings into policy-relevant recommendations and reports for government and UN or international partners is required.

- At least **one (1) researcher** with a higher education degree in social sciences, public health, gender studies, or a related field, with a minimum of five (5) years of experience in social research, particularly quantitative data collection and analysis. Proven experience on at least two (2) relevant assignments related to gender equality, menstrual health, education, or access to essential services, including experience in desk review and comparative analysis of international policies and practices.

Signature of Requesting Officer:

Signed by:

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 Nana Avaliani

20-Jan-2026

TOR – Research on Menstrual Poverty in Georgia

**Approved By:
 The Head of Office**

Signed by:

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 Mariam Bandzeladze

20-Jan-2026