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UNFPA in Georgia
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TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

National Study on Violence against Older Persons 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 2026–2029 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. It focuses 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 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). Within this framework, UNFPA supports the generation of evidence on gender-based violence across the life course, including violence experienced by older women and men.

Population ageing is one of the most significant demographic transformations of our time. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the number of people aged 60 and over worldwide is expected to rise from about 900 million in 2015 to around 2 billion by 2050. WHO estimates that around one in six people aged 60 and over living in community settings experiences some form of abuse each year, with psychological abuse, financial abuse and neglect among the most commonly reported forms.

Population ageing is also a major demographic and social issue for Georgia. According to the National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat), as of 1 January 2025, 16.6 percent of the population was aged 65 and over — roughly one in six people. This places growing demands on social protection, health, long-term care and other public systems, and makes the effective protection of older persons' rights, dignity and safety increasingly important.

Violence against older persons is both a human rights violation and a significant public health concern. It often remains hidden and may occur within the family, in intimate partner or kinship relationships, in care settings, in health and social institutions, or in any setting where an older person depends on another person or organization. Risk is shaped by the interaction of individual, family, community and societal factors, including poor health, functional dependency, disability, cognitive difficulties, low income, social isolation, dependency on care, family conflict, ageism, gender inequality accumulated over the life course, and limited access to support services.

In Georgia, data on violence against older persons remain fragmented. Available official, administrative and research sources do not allow a comprehensive assessment of the true scale of the problem, the prevalence of its different forms, risk and protective factors, the characteristics of

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perpetrators, help-seeking practices, or the effectiveness of the existing institutional response. Under-reporting is a further challenge: older persons may not recognize certain behaviours as violence, may be reluctant to disclose abuse by a family member or caregiver, may fear the consequences, may depend on the perpetrator, or may not know where to seek help. Administrative data on registered cases alone therefore cannot capture the real prevalence of violence.

A national study combining different data sources and research methods is therefore needed. It should provide both a quantitative estimate of the prevalence of violence and an in-depth understanding of older persons' experiences, social norms, help-seeking, access to services and the institutional response. The study will also establish baseline indicators and a documented methodology that allow the study to be repeated in the future and changes to be tracked over time.

Development Objectives

Within the framework of the UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality (UNJP4GE), funded by the Government of Sweden, the UNFPA Country Office in Georgia is launching the first National Study on Violence against Older Persons in Georgia.

For this purpose, UNFPA Georgia seeks a research organization to generate reliable, comprehensive and policy-relevant evidence on the prevalence, forms, characteristics, risk and protective factors and consequences of violence against older persons; on disclosure and help-seeking practices; and on access to services and the institutional response. The findings will inform the development of policies, programmes and services for the prevention of and response to violence against older persons, and will serve as a baseline for future monitoring. UNFPA will provide the draft of the study methodology to the research organization.

The study will specifically:

- estimate the prevalence of different forms of violence against older persons, including physical, psychological, sexual, financial/economic violence, and neglect and abandonment;
- examine the frequency, recurrence, severity and context of violence, and the characteristics of alleged perpetrators and their relationship to the victim;
- identify individual, family, community and institutional risk and protective factors, including social isolation, economic dependency, dependency on care, health and functional status, and ageism;
- analyse gender and intersectional differences in experiences of violence, with particular attention to older women and older persons with disabilities;
- assess the physical, psychological, social and economic consequences of violence, including its effect on older persons' autonomy and quality of life;
- examine perceptions of violence, disclosure and help-seeking practices, sources of formal and informal support, and barriers to obtaining help;
- assess awareness, availability, accessibility, use and relevance of social, health, legal and protection services;
- review the response, referral and coordination practices of state and non-state institutions;
- develop evidence-based recommendations for improving prevention and response; and
- establish baseline indicators and a methodological basis for future monitoring and repeat studies.

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Immediate Objectives

The National Study on Violence against Older Persons in Georgia will have the following characteristics:

- **Mixed-methods design.** The study will combine desk research, a nationally representative quantitative survey and qualitative research, integrated within a single analytical framework.
- **Conceptual framework.** The study will be grounded in a human rights-based, gender-sensitive, intersectional and trauma-informed approach, the WHO ecological model and a life-course perspective, and the principle of Leaving No One Behind.
- **Geographic coverage.** The study will cover all regions of Georgia under the control of the Government of Georgia, including Tbilisi, with representation of urban and rural settlements, including high-mountain and hard-to-reach areas and areas with ethnic minority populations.

Desk research

The desk research will review international and national evidence, official statistics, administrative data, and legal and policy documents. It will cover five areas:

- existing evidence on the prevalence, forms, risk and protective factors, consequences of and help-seeking for violence against older persons;
- the legal and policy framework, assessed against Georgia's international commitments;
- institutional mechanisms, including the mandates of responsible agencies, identification, referral, case management and inter-agency coordination;
- mapping of social, health, legal, protection and care services, their geographic coverage, eligibility criteria and accessibility; and
- relevant international practice in prevention, early identification, risk assessment, multisectoral response, quality control of long-term care, and monitoring.

The desk research will identify legal, policy, institutional, service and data gaps and will inform the design of the research instruments.

Quantitative survey

- **Target population:** older women and men permanently residing in private households in the territory controlled by the Government of Georgia. The age threshold (65+, or 60+ for international comparability) will be agreed with UNFPA at the inception stage.
- **Sample size:** 2,000 respondents, including older women and men, and older women and men with disabilities.
- **Persons with disabilities:** disability status will be identified using an internationally recognized tool, such as the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning. The sample must allow statistically meaningful disaggregated analysis for older women and men with disabilities; where needed, the bidder will propose an oversample with appropriate weighting.
- **Sampling design:** a stratified multi-stage probability sample based on the most recent official sampling frame, with territorial clusters at the first stage, households at the second stage and one eligible respondent per household selected using a standardized random procedure. Substitution of respondents by interviewers is not allowed.
- **Instrument:** a structured questionnaire using behaviour-specific questions that describe concrete acts, so that measurement does not depend on whether respondents perceive their experience as violence. Prevalence will be measured for defined reference periods, including

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the past 12 months. Where justified, internationally validated instruments or their components will be adapted to the Georgian context.

- **Questionnaire modules:** socio-demographic characteristics and living conditions; health, functional status and care needs; economic situation and control over personal resources; social support, isolation and ageism; psychological, physical, sexual, financial and economic violence, neglect and abandonment; frequency, recurrence, context and consequences of violence; disclosure, help-seeking and barriers; awareness and use of services and institutional trust.
- **Data collection:** face-to-face interviews, preferably using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). The questionnaire will be available in Georgian and, where needed, in minority languages (Azerbaijani and Armenian), with communication adaptations for persons with disabilities.
- **Analysis:** weighted descriptive, subgroup and multivariate analysis, with confidence intervals for key estimates. Results will be disaggregated by sex, age group, disability status, urban/rural residence, region (where precision allows), economic situation, functional limitation and care needs. Statistical associations will not be interpreted as causal relationships.

Older persons living in residential or institutional care are not included in this study.

Qualitative research

The qualitative component will provide an in-depth understanding of experiences of violence, its family and social context, perceptions and normalization of violence, barriers to disclosure and help-seeking, and institutional response practices. It will use:

- **in-depth interviews** with older persons, including those living alone, aged 80 and over, with disabilities, dependent on care, and from ethnic minorities;
- **focus group discussions** with older persons, family members and informal caregivers, and staff of service provider NGOs, on social norms, ageism, care practices and service challenges (focus groups will not be used to discuss individual cases of violence); and
- **key informant interviews** with representatives of the Public Defender's Office of Georgia; NGOs providing social, psychosocial, legal, shelter and other support services to older persons and to victims of violence; organizations representing older persons.

Participants will be selected through purposive sampling for maximum variation. Bidders will propose the number of interviews and focus groups by participant group, with a rationale based on thematic saturation.

Integration and validation

Findings from the desk, quantitative and qualitative components will be triangulated by data source, method and participant perspective, identifying convergence, complementarity and divergence. Particular attention will be paid to gaps between legally defined mechanisms and their implementation in practice. Key findings and recommendations will be discussed with relevant stakeholders to check factual accuracy and practical relevance. The validation process will not compromise the independence of the research or change evidence-based findings.

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Deliverables

The selected research organization will be responsible for the following deliverables. Due dates are indicative; bidders will propose a detailed timeline within the overall period.

#	Deliverable	Language	Indicative due date
1	Inception report: refined methodology, research questions and indicator matrix, sampling design and sample size calculation, qualitative sampling plan, analysis plan, work plan, risk management plan	Georgian	Mid-December 2026
2	Ethics and safety package: ethics and safety protocol, informed consent forms, referral pathway and service directory, safety algorithm for situations of immediate danger, data protection plan, and proof of submission to an independent ethics committee	Georgian	Mid-December 2026
3	Desk review report, including the service mapping	Georgian	Early January 2027
4	Final research instruments after cognitive testing and piloting (questionnaire, CAPI script, interview and focus group guides), with a pilot report and a fieldwork training report	Georgian	Mid-January 2027
5	Fieldwork completion report, with sample implementation, response rates and quality control results	Georgian	End of February 2027
6	Clean, anonymized and weighted quantitative dataset (SPSS or Stata) with codebook and weighting documentation; anonymized qualitative transcripts and coding framework	Georgian	Early March 2027
7	Draft technical report and presentation of preliminary findings at a validation meeting	Georgian	Mid-March 2027
8	Final technical report, incorporating stakeholder and UNFPA feedback	Georgian	31 March 2027
9	Communication report presenting a concise analysis of all components of the study and key recommendations	Georgian and English	31 March 2027

The final technical report will include an executive summary, methodology, findings by research area, integrated analysis, limitations, conclusions and evidence-based, prioritized recommendations addressed to specific duty bearers. All final products must be edited, proofread and formatted ready for publication, in line with UNFPA visibility guidelines and the UNJP4GE donor visibility requirements.

Duration and Working Schedule

The selected research organization will start implementing the activities outlined in this ToR in December 2026 and will submit all deliverables by 31 March 2027.

Given the four-month timeframe, bidders must present a realistic work plan that allows for ethics review before primary data collection, sufficient time for fieldwork across all regions in winter conditions, and parallel implementation of the quantitative and qualitative components where appropriate.

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

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UNFPA reserves the right to extend the deadline for submission of the deliverables if a delay is caused by circumstances beyond the control of the research organization. Any extension will be agreed in writing between the parties.

Activities

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

1. **Inception and study design**
    - Agree the final methodology, research questions, indicators, age threshold and target population with UNFPA.
    - Prepare the sampling design, sample size calculation (accounting for expected prevalence, confidence level, margin of error, design effect, non-response and planned subgroup analysis) and the qualitative sampling plan.
    - Prepare the work plan, analysis plan and risk management plan.
2. **Desk research and service mapping**
    - Review international and national evidence, legislation, policies, official statistics and administrative data.
    - Request administrative data from relevant agencies, within data availability.
    - Map available social, health, legal, protection and care services by region.
3. **Development and testing of instruments**
    - Develop the questionnaire, CAPI script, interview and focus group guides, and consent forms.
    - Conduct expert review, linguistic and cultural adaptation (including minority-language versions), cognitive testing and a pilot.
    - Finalize the instruments and document all changes made after piloting.
4. **Ethics approval and safety arrangements**
    - Submit the study protocol and instruments to an independent ethics committee before primary data collection.
    - Establish the referral pathway and verify the availability of the listed services.
5. **Training of the field team**
    - Train interviewers and supervisors on the methodology, sampling rules, forms of violence against older persons, age- and gender-sensitive communication, trauma-informed interviewing, informed consent, confidentiality, safety protocols and referral.
    - Assess trainees; only those who meet predefined criteria will take part in fieldwork.
6. **Quantitative and qualitative data collection**
    - Conduct the household survey according to the approved sampling design, with documented call-backs and final status of all sampled units.
    - Conduct in-depth interviews, focus groups and key informant interviews.
    - Monitor sample implementation, interview duration, non-response, data quality and safety on a daily basis, and report progress to UNFPA regularly.
7. **Data processing and analysis**
    - Clean, code, weight and analyse quantitative data; keep raw, cleaned and analysis datasets as separate versions with a change log.
    - Transcribe, anonymize and thematically code qualitative data.
    - Triangulate and integrate findings from all components.
8. **Reporting, validation and dissemination**

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- Prepare the draft report and present preliminary findings at a validation meeting with stakeholders, including organizations representing older persons.
- Finalize the technical report and the communication report.
- Support UNFPA in presenting the findings to state agencies, international organizations and civil society, as requested.

Ethical, Safety and Data Protection Requirements

The safety, dignity and well-being of participants take priority over the collection of data. The research organization must apply the principles of voluntary participation, autonomy, equality, confidentiality and do no harm at every stage, in line with WHO and international ethical and safety recommendations for research on violence.

At a minimum, the research organization must ensure that:

- the study protocol, instruments, consent procedures, safety mechanisms, referral pathway and data protection plan are reviewed by an independent ethics committee before primary data collection begins;
- informed consent is treated as an ongoing process; separate consent is obtained for audio recording; participation or refusal has no effect on access to services;
- age, disability or dependency on care is not treated in itself as lack of capacity; supported and adapted consent procedures are used where needed; **an alleged perpetrator or a person with a conflict of interest may never give consent on a participant's behalf**;
- questions on violence are asked only in a private and safe setting, without family members or caregivers present; if privacy cannot be ensured, sensitive questions are not asked and the interview is postponed or safely ended;
- a written protocol is in place for responding to emotional distress, ongoing violence and immediate danger, with clear responsibilities; researchers do not investigate cases or act as police, social workers or clinicians;
- the referral mechanism includes informational referral, active referral with the participant's consent, and emergency response, and is delivered in a way that does not expose the participant's experience to others;
- mandatory reporting obligations under Georgian law are clarified before fieldwork, and participants are informed of any limits to confidentiality;
- back-checks for quality control never repeat questions on experiences of violence;
- only data necessary for the study are collected; identifying information is stored separately from research data; data are encrypted and access is restricted; retention and destruction periods are defined; and published results do not allow direct or indirect identification of participants, in compliance with the Law of Georgia on Personal Data Protection; and
- the physical and psychological safety of the field team is ensured through safe travel arrangements, supervision, incident reporting and access to professional support.

All data, instruments and products developed under this assignment are the property of UNFPA and may not be used or shared without UNFPA's written consent.

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Inputs

The study is expected to be completed between December 2026 and March 2027. A reasonable timeline for the deliverables will be proposed by the interested research organization, subject to negotiation with UNFPA.

UNFPA reserves the right to select the research organization based on the best offer, and to introduce minor changes to the proposal subject to agreement with the organization.

The interested research organization will submit the following documents:

- Profile of the research organization and its relevance to the assignment.
- Portfolio of the research organization, demonstrating skills in research design and methods, including sampling and data collection through nationwide field surveys.
- Technical proposal, including an overall description of the study (purpose and methodology), the proposed sampling design and sample size calculation (including the approach to persons with disabilities), the qualitative sample by participant group, and the proposed approach to ethics, safety and referral.
- Schedule of activities and timeline of deliverables.
- CVs of the key personnel and a description of the field team (number of interviewers and supervisors, including their sex balance).
- Budget associated with the study.

Minimum Specifications

A research organization must:

- Be a legally constituted company in Georgia that can provide the requested services and has the legal capacity to enter into a contract with UNFPA to perform in the country, or act 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 demonstrating that the organization has conducted at least two (2) nationwide field surveys.
- Have an established organizational structure with a clear division of roles within the team and a quality assurance process.

Experience in conducting research on gender-based violence, violence against women or other sensitive topics, and in research with older persons or persons with disabilities, will be considered an asset.

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, public health, public policy, gender studies, demography 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-based violence, gender equality, ageing, social protection 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, UN or international partners is required.

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- **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-based violence, gender equality, ageing, disability or access to essential services, including experience in desk review and qualitative research.

Signature of Requesting Officer:	**Approved By: The Head of Office**:
Signed by: Nana Avaliani F044CB2C9C324A8...	Signed by: 10A07856FC0D484...
Name: Nana Avaliani	Name: Mariam Bandzeladze, Ph.D.
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Date: 05-Nov-2026	Date: 05-Nov-2026