

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Ref No: RFP/SGPOP8/IND-2026-1

Community Grants for GEF Small Grants Programme- Operational Phase 8 (SGP- OP8) in India

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Abbreviations

BD	Biodiversity
CBOs	Community-Based Organisations
CCM	Climate Change Mitigation
CPS	Country Programme Strategy
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CV	Curriculum Vitae
EE	Energy Efficient
FCRA	Foreign Contribution Regulation Act
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GTC	General Terms and Conditions
ha	Hectares
ICCA	Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas
NHI	National Host Institution
IP	Implementing Partner
ISO	International Organisation for Standardization
IT	Income Tax
LD	Land Degradation
MoEF&CC	Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change, Government of India
NITI Aayog	National Institute for Transforming India Aayog
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NSC	National Steering Committee
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forest Products
OECM	Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures
OP	Operational Phase
PA	Protected Areas
PBRs	People's Biodiversity Registers
QCBS	Quality- and Cost-Based Selection
RAC	Regional Advisory Committee
RE	Renewable Energy

RFP	Request for Proposal
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SHGs	Self-Help Groups
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
tCO ₂ e	Tonnes of CO ₂ -equivalent
TERI	The Energy and Resources Institute
ToR	Terms of Reference
UCP	Upgraded Country Programme
UN Agency	United Nations Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USD	US Dollar

Solicitation of Proposal

Small Grants Programme
Central Project Management Unit
The Energy and Resources Institute
India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road
New Delhi -110003, India

Subject: Request for Proposal (RFP) from NGOs/CSOs/CBOs for Community Grants for the GEF Small Grants Programme – Operational phase 8 (SGP – OP 8) in India

Dear Sir/Madam,

1. You are hereby requested to submit a Proposal for Community Grants in the selected focus landscapes of Aravallis/ Western Ghats/ Coastal/North-East and Himalayas under the Eighth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in India.
2. It may be noted that the proposal submitted by you would be treated as the basis for the contract between TERI and your organization. In case of selection of your organization, you will be required to execute an agreement with TERI. Such an agreement will include entire General Terms and Conditions applicable in the office of TERI for the purpose of hiring and procuring services in terms of Annexure-4.
3. To facilitate submission of the referred proposal, please find appended below the complete details along with Proposal format as annexure.
4. This RFP is not to be construed in any way as an offer to contract with your Organization/ Institution.
5. One organization will be eligible to apply for only one community grant.
6. The proposal must be prepared in English.
7. Proposals should be submitted on or before the deadline (i.e., within the stipulated duration of the date of publication of this RFP). Terms and Conditions of your Proposal shall remain binding upon you for a minimum period of one hundred twenty (120) days. You are requested to ensure that your proposal is submitted well before the deadline. It should also be ensured that proposal must be substantiated and documented with the necessary documents and certificates duly self-attested in the given format.
8. The Proposal that complies with all the requirements, which achieves qualifying marks in technical evaluation criteria and offers the best value for money, shall be considered for selection and award of contractual work. Any offer that does not meet the requirements shall be rejected.

9. Please be advised that TERI is not bound to accept any Proposal, award a contract, or be responsible for any costs associated with a Service Providers preparation and submission of the Proposal, regardless of the outcome or the manner of conducting the selection process.
10. The decision of the National Steering Committee of SGP-OP8 on selection of the community grantees will be final.

Thank you and we are anticipating obtaining your proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Manish Kumar Pandey
National Coordinator
SGP-OP8, India
Website- <https://sgp-india.org/>

Proposal Submission Process

Name of the Assignment	Request for Proposal (RFP) from NGOs/CSOs/CBOs for Community Grants under the Eighth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in India
Mode of Tender Notification	MoEF&CC Website, UNDP website, TERI Website, SGP India Website, Social Media
Date of Publication	31 July 2026
Email for seeking Clarifications/Queries	sgpindia@teri.res.in
Online Orientation Meeting	7 August 2026 (Meeting link will be available on SGP India Website)
Last date for seeking Clarifications / Queries	10 August 2026
Mode of submitting Proposals	https://sgp-india.org/
Last Date & Time for receiving Proposals	31 August 2026 upto 1800 hours

Annexure A - Call for Proposals: GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) - Operational Phase 8 (OP8) - Terms of Reference (ToR)

1. Background

The GEF Small Grants Programme in India is being executed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Government of India, and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) serves as the national host institution for the programme in India.

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) provides financial and technical support to non-government organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs). The programme empowers local communities to take collective action to address global environmental challenges while enhancing local livelihoods and promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

Under Operational Phase 8 (OP8), the SGP in India is implementing a landscape-based approach that promotes integrated solutions to interrelated environmental and socio-economic issues.

Five priority landscapes have been selected based on their ecological sensitivity, socio-economic vulnerability, and high dependence of communities on ecosystems and natural resources. In alignment with the OP8 Global Strategic Initiatives, interventions should focus on conservation of threatened ecosystems, sustainable agriculture, low-carbon energy access, chemical & waste management and sustainable urban solutions.

This Call for Proposals seeks to identify and support innovative, community-driven projects that align with the OP8 strategic priorities and contribute to India's national development and environmental objectives. The initiative is intended to complement and strengthen relevant state and central government schemes, including PM-PRANAM, Green India Mission, CAMPA, VB-GRAMG, PM-KUSUM, NRLM, Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North-Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) and other related programmes.

2. Objectives of the Call

The objective of this Call for Proposals is to support community-driven initiatives in five selected landscapes in India that address environmental challenges while promoting sustainable development and social inclusion.

Specifically, the proposed projects should:

- Align with the OP8 strategic priorities, delivering measurable environmental and socio-economic benefits.
- Enhance community resilience and livelihoods through sustainable natural resource management, climate-smart practices, and ecosystem conservation.

- Foster inclusivity and equity, ensuring active participation and leadership of women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWDs);
- Encourage knowledge generation and sharing, facilitating the documentation, replication, and scaling-up of innovative and successful community-based solutions.
- Promote partnerships and community ownership, strengthening collaboration among local stakeholders, authorities, and civil society for lasting impact.

3. Priority Themes for Funding

Proposals should focus on one or more of the following strategic thematic areas:

Community-Based Conservation of Threatened Ecosystems and Species

- This priority aims to strengthen the role of local communities in the equitable governance and protection of biodiversity-rich landscapes and seascapes. The approach emphasizes locally appropriate conservation models that safeguard critical ecosystems and threatened species while ensuring community rights and participation.
- SGP OP8 will support biodiversity-friendly and ecosystem-based livelihood models that integrate conservation with sustainable use, such as climate-resilient agriculture, non-timber forest produce (NTFP)-based value chains, nature-positive tourism, and blue economy models including sustainable coastal fisheries, mangrove restoration, and marine biodiversity monitoring.
- Targeted efforts will be made to protect and recover populations of threatened, rare, endemic, and endangered species, with special emphasis on participatory species monitoring, habitat restoration, and mitigating threats like poaching, invasive species, and habitat degradation. The program will also invest in community-based documentation, awareness generation, and campaigns to promote positive conservation behaviour, particularly among youth and children.

Sustainable Agriculture and Fisheries, and Food Security

- This priority supports the transition to resilient and biodiversity-friendly food systems that sustain livelihoods in vulnerable ecosystems. It will promote agroecological practices, diversification, and restoration of degraded lands and water bodies, while addressing food and nutritional security.
- Priority will be given to improving productivity and efficiency across food value chains in ecologically sensitive areas, especially in mountainous, rainfed, and coastal zones. Projects will focus on reducing external input dependence, promoting soil and water conservation, traditional seed and breed conservation, organic and natural farming practices, and climate-smart agriculture techniques adapted to local contexts. The programme will promote diversification of livelihoods through support to integrated farming systems, agroforestry, indigenous crop and livestock varieties, and sustainable inland and marine fisheries.
- To address the environmental footprint of food systems, SGP OP8 will promote

interventions aimed at eliminating deforestation from agricultural value chains and upscaling landscape restoration through farmer-led approaches. This includes regenerating degraded lands, enhancing agroecosystem services, and incentivizing community participation in forest-agriculture interface management.

Low-Carbon Energy Access and Co-Benefits

- Recognizing the link between energy poverty and environmental degradation, this priority focuses on promoting decentralized renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions. Interventions will enhance livelihood opportunities and climate resilience, especially in underserved rural and peri-urban areas.
- SGP OP8 will scale up access to renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies in underserved regions. Special attention will be paid to supporting local innovations and partnerships for the delivery of solar lighting, solar irrigation pumps, efficient cookstoves, and clean cooking solutions in forest and mountain communities. These interventions will be co-designed with community institutions, ensuring ownership, sustainability, and alignment with national missions such as the National Solar Mission, UJALA scheme, and PM-KUSUM for solar-powered agriculture. The programme will also prioritize off-grid energy systems for productive uses in rural and peri-urban areas, including powering agri-processing units, eco-tourism enterprises, and community centres. Women's self-help groups, forest-dependent communities, and youth-led enterprises will be supported in integrating low-carbon energy solutions into their economic activities. Skill-building, training, and maintenance support will be integral components to ensure long-term viability.

Local to Global Coalitions for Chemicals and Waste Management

- This theme seeks to reduce environmental and health risks by promoting safe, inclusive and circular approaches to chemical and waste management. It will foster community-led innovations and strengthen partnerships to influence broader policy frameworks.
- SGP OP8 will support communities in adopting circular economy principles through decentralized solid waste management, especially around Protected Areas, ecotourism sites, and rural clusters. Community-based waste management models will include composting, segregation, recycling enterprises, and awareness-building campaigns, particularly involving women's groups, youth, and school children. The programme will also promote sustainable agriculture by reducing or eliminating the use of synthetic agrochemicals.

Catalysing Sustainable Urban Solutions

- This priority promotes inclusive, nature-based, and low-emission innovations for sustainable urban development. It aims to demonstrate community-led models addressing challenges such as solid waste, energy, biodiversity loss, and urban ecosystem degradation in India's fast-growing urban landscapes.
- SGP OP8 recognizes the need for community-led, socially inclusive urban innovations to

support India's transition to low-emission, climate-resilient urban development. OP8 will demonstrate scalable, bottom-up models for integrated urban sustainability. These efforts will complement ongoing national schemes like the Smart Cities Mission, AMRUT, and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. Under this strategic priority, the programme will strengthen capacities of community-based organizations, local urban institutions, and informal sector groups to adopt nature-based and low-carbon solutions. Pilot interventions may include decentralized composting and plastic recycling units, urban biodiversity corridors, sustainable transport and mobility innovations, rooftop gardening for food and cooling, and urban wetland restoration. SGP OP8 will prioritize convergence with municipal governments, private sector partners, and research institutions to co-create and replicate successful models.

4. Geographic Focus

SGP-OP8 will focus on the following five landscapes:

Region	State/Union Territory	District
Aravallis	Rajasthan	Ajmer, Alwar, Banswara, Bharatpur, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Dausa, Dungarpur, Jaipur, Jhunjhunu, Karauli, Nagaur, Pali, Pratapgarh, Rajsamand, Sawai Madhopur, Sikar, Sirohi, Udaipur
	Gujarat	Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Mehsana, Aravalli
	Haryana	Bhiwani, Mahendragarh, Gurugram, Faridabad, Rewari, Charkhi Dadri
	Delhi	South Delhi
Western Ghats	Goa	North Goa, South Goa
	Karnataka	Uttara Kannada, Udupi, Dakshina Kannada
Coastal	Odisha	Balasore, Bhadrak
	West Bengal	Sundarbans- South 24 Parganas
North-East	Meghalaya	South Garo Hills, West Garo Hills
	Assam	Sonitpur, Biswanath, Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Chirang, Tamulpur
	Arunachal Pradesh	West Kameng
Himalayas	Ladakh	Kargil
	Uttarakhand	Gangotri, Govind

5. Competencies required for the project

Eligible applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a registered NGO/Trust/Society in India.
- Have proven experience in one or more of the following areas: environmental conservation, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, waste management, urban solutions or community development.
- Have an office in the focus landscape where the project is proposed.
- Demonstrate inclusive participation, ensuring meaningful involvement of women, youth, and persons with disabilities in project design and implementation.
- Ability to mobilize co-financing equivalent to at least a 1:1 ratio of the SGP grant, either in the form of cash and/or in-kind contributions, as part of the total project budget.
- Commit to transparent management and active collaboration with local authorities and the SGP team.
- Develop and implement a clear communication plan outlining strategies for knowledge sharing, visibility, community engagement, and dissemination of project results and best practices.

6. Grant Size and Duration

- **Maximum Grant Amount:** The SGP provides grant assistance of up to US\$75,000 per project, equivalent to a maximum of INR 67,00,000 in India. For organizations in the Northeastern Region (NER) applying under the relaxed eligibility criteria, the maximum grant amount is US\$30,000, equivalent to INR 27,00,000 per project.
- **Project Duration:** Between 12 to 24 months
- **Co-financing Requirement:** Applicants must provide a minimum co-financing contribution equivalent to the SGP grant amount, maintaining at least a 1:1 ratio. Co-financing may be provided in the form of cash and/or in-kind contributions.

7. Relaxation in eligibility criteria for North-East Landscape

The organization should have undertaken at least 3 projects in the field of climate change, biodiversity conservation and land degradation in the northeast landscape of more than or equivalent to INR 5 Lakhs each in the last 5 financial years.

The organization should have experience in implementing government/foundation/philanthropy funded 2 projects in the landscape.

(For organizations in NER, applying under the relaxed criteria, the funding will be up to a sum of US \$30,000 each i.e. INR 27,00,000.)

8. Submission Process

Proposals should be submitted online on or before 31 August 2026. Hard copies should be sent by courier to Small Grants Program Secretariat, TERI, New Delhi. For further

information and details, please refer to the SGP India website- <https://sgp-india.org/>

9. Review and Selection Process

All submitted proposals will be screened for eligibility and evaluated against the prescribed selection criteria, in accordance with the Country Programme Strategy (CPS).

Eligible proposals will be compiled and reviewed through the three-tier review and selection mechanism of the Small Grants Programme (SGP).

Shortlisted applicants may be contacted to provide clarifications, additional information, or further refine their proposals, if required.

Based on the recommendations of the review process, the final approval of projects will be made by the National Steering Committee (NSC).

NOTE: This Call for Proposals forms the basis for applying for GEF SGP grants. It must neither be construed as a grant agreement nor be regarded as confirmation of a grant awarded by the GEF Small Grants Programme to any entity. This Call for Proposals is not for sale, and neither does the GEF Small Grants Programme charge a fee for any stage of the proposal development and submission process.

Disclaimer: Proposals submitted after the deadline date will not be considered, and only successful applicants will be contacted.

Annexure B - Results Framework of SGP OP8

Alignment with SDGs

The CPS will contribute to the following SDGs: 1-Reducing Poverty, 5-Gender Equality, 7-Affordable and Clean Energy, 11-Sustainable Cities and Communities, 12-Responsible Consumption and Production, 13-Climate Action, 14-Life Below Water, 15-Life on Land, and 17-Partnerships for the Goals.

Synergy with UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD):

By 2027, Government of India, state governments, communities, private sector and other actors take informed actions to address climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss and restore ecological integrity through improved knowledge, capacity and mainstreaming of relevant actions across sectoral programmes, policies and plans.

OP8 SGP Programme Goal: Engage local CSOs/CBOs in landscape-seascape approaches across the world, providing them access to knowledge and information, capacitating them through learning-by-doing, skills development, and delivering technical and grant assistance for interventions that enhance wellbeing and socioeconomic conditions and generate global environmental benefits.

1 OP8 SGP CPS Strategic Initiatives	2 CPS Indicators and Targets
<u>Strategic Initiative 1:</u> Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species	30,000 hectares of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (GEF core indicator 4.1 and 4.3) 1,500 hectares of marine protected areas created or under improved management (GEF core indicator 2.2) 3,500 hectares of marine habitat under improved practices (GEF core indicator 5)
<u>Strategic Initiative 2:</u> Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security	4,000 hectares of land and ecosystems under restoration (GEF core indicator 3.1) 5 (number of) partnerships to advance sustainable agriculture and fisheries and/or food security (such as diversification, sustainable intensification, sustainable fisheries management, agroecological farming practices, climate-smart agriculture, certification programmes, local sourcing initiatives, waste reduction and circular economy, etc.)
<u>Strategic Initiative 3:</u> Low-carbon energy access co-benefits	49,275 metric tons of CO2 emissions (lifetime) mitigated/avoided (GEF core indicator 6) 1 MW increase in installed renewable energy capacity from community-scale systems (e.g., biomass, micro-hydro, solar, etc.) 10 (number of) locally adapted solutions promoting low-carbon technologies (such as new/modified biogas technology, locally developed energy-efficient stoves, innovative uses of solar/wind energy, etc.)

<u>Strategic Initiative 4:</u> Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management	2 (number of) policy recommendations or advocacy initiatives related to land-based pollution as a result of SGP project 2 (number of) local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management strengthened and/or established
<u>Strategic Initiative 5:</u> Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions	4 (number of) community-based sustainable solutions in urban landscapes (e.g., transport, biodiversity conservation, chemical and waste management, energy efficiency, watershed protection, etc.) 10% (number of) projects with targeted urban solutions focus
<u>Strategic Initiative 6:</u> CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms	15 (number of) CSO-government-private sector dialogues formed or strengthened 1,500 (number of) representatives from social inclusion group (Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, persons with disability, farmers, other marginalized groups) meaningfully engaged in multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms
<u>Strategic Initiative 7:</u> Enhancing social inclusion	15,000 (number of) people (7,500 women) benefitting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (GEF core indicator 11) 80% projects with focused interventions promoting gender equality and women's empowerment 50% (number of) projects that demonstrate models of engaging (a) Local community and tribal groups, (b) youth, and (c) persons with disabilities. 30% grants with targeted support for 1) women or women groups; 2) youth or youth-led groups; 3) Local community and tribal groups 30% of total grant portfolio accessed by 1) women or women groups; 2) youth or youth-led groups; 3) Local community and tribal groups
Strategic Initiative 8: Monitoring and Evaluation and Knowledge Management	50% (number of) projects with meetings involving local CSOs/CBOs or communities to monitor project results, assess impacts, and identify lessons learned 10 (number of) knowledge exchange/sharing events with participation of local communities 1 (number of) online knowledge repository developed as a result of SGP project 5 (number of) country impact reviews conducted with evidence of SGP impact and lessons learned. 2 (number of) South-South exchanges between communities, NGOs/CSOs, or other partners within or across countries to transfer knowledge, replicate technology, tools or approaches on global environmental issues

Annexure C - Eligibility Criteria

Registration

1. The NGO/CSO/CBO should be registered as a trust / society in India for more than 5 years. The organization must have a minimum of 5 years of experience. Registration documents of the Trust/Society to be submitted.
2. NGO/CSO/CBO must be registered at the DARPAN portal of NITI Aayog and should have a valid unique ID with updated details.
3. IT returns for the FY 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 (mandatory) and FCRA (if applicable) to be submitted.
4. Audited accounts (including Balance Sheet, Income and Expenditure, Schedules, Notes of Accounts, and Auditor's Report) for the FY 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 to be submitted.
5. The latest Annual Report should be submitted (FY 2025-26)

Organisational Experience

1. The organization must have at least 5 years of experience working on community- based programmes in the field of environment, climate change, biodiversity conservation, land degradation, waste management and urban solutions in the focus landscape.
2. The applicant organization should have an office in the selected intervention landscape state, (Proof of the office in the focus landscape to be submitted).
3. The organization should have undertaken a minimum 3 projects in the field of climate change, biodiversity conservation, land degradation waste management and urban solutions of value more than or equivalent to INR 15 lakh each in the last 5 financial years, viz. FY 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 preferably in the focused landscape. (Relaxation in the eligibility criteria for applicants from North-East Region in terms of project value is INR 5 lakhs).
4. NGOs/CBOs/CSOs should have experience in implementing minimum 3 government/philanthropy/foundation funded projects in the focused landscape in the last 5 financial years, viz. FY 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26. (Relaxation in the eligibility criteria for applicants from North-East Region in terms of minimum projects is 2).
5. Preference will be given to organizations who have participated in the earlier phases of the GEF Small Grants Programme in India
6. The organization should not have been debarred by any Government or UN agency, at any point of time. A self-declaration to this effect to be submitted.

Financial Capacity

The Applicant Organization should have received an average turnover of INR 30,00,000 (Thirty Lakhs) from project grants during the last 3 (three) financial years viz. 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 preceding the Proposal due date. Organizations need to provide audited accounts and Auditor's Report.

Availability of Key Professionals

The Organization must have professionals having adequate experience and expertise in thematic areas and project management for this assignment. Organization should make available Curriculum Vitae of all Key Professionals meeting the requirements of the project. Detailed and duly verified CVs of such professionals should be provided as per the format given.

Annexure D - Evaluation and Selection of Applicants

Selection Process

A two-step Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) approach shall be adopted for examination of the project proposals (80% Technical and 20% Financial). The decision of the National Steering Committee of the SGP-OP8 on the selection of the community grantees will be final.

Opening & Administrative Checks

As an initial step, the following will be assessed:

Compliance with the submission deadline- If the deadline has not been met, the application will automatically be rejected.

The full application form satisfies all the criteria specified in Annexure B.

If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on this basis alone and the application not evaluated further.

Applications that pass this first administrative check will be evaluated as per the evaluation matrix outlined in Table.

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria for Contract Award	- Compliance on Preliminary Examination of Proposals - Compliance on Essential Eligibility/Qualification requirements - At least 70% score in the technical proposal - Full acceptance of the TERI General Terms and Conditions (GTC). This is a mandatory criterion. Non-acceptance of the GTC may be grounds for the rejection of the Proposal.
Criteria for Preliminary Examination of Proposals	Eligibility Criteria
Criteria for the Assessment of Proposal <i>Detailed breakup for internal evaluation only</i>	- Technical Proposal (80%) - Total number of projects implemented in the thematic areas (Max. Marks: 20) - Total number of projects in the focus landscape (Max. Marks: 20) - Approach and methodology proposed (Max. Marks: 20) - Project Advocacy Parameters (Max. Marks: 20) - Financial Proposal (20%) - Co-financing (Max. Marks: 10) - Manpower Cost (Max. Marks: 5) - Miscellaneous Costs (Max. Marks: 5)

Award of contract	• The Proposal that complies with all the requirements, meets the evaluation criteria, and offers the best value for money shall be selected and awarded the contract. • Contract will be allocated to the applicant organization scoring highest marks in combined evaluation (technical + financial proposal). • The decision of the National Steering Committee on the acceptance/rejection of any proposal is final.
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Annexure E - Project Proposal Template

Word File of Proposal attached separately.