
"In the Footsteps of Conservation: Donor Engagement Journey to Solukhumbu via Salpa-Arun Trail"



THE PARTNERS NEPAL



OCTOBER 2025

Published by:
THE PARTNERS NEPAL (TPN)

TEXT AND CONCEPT:
ANG RITA SHERPA
THE PARTNERS NEPAL

Photo credits:
ANG RITA SHERPA, BHEEM RAJ RAI, BHALA KAJI KULUNG (THE
PARTNERS NEPAL)

Cover photo: MANFRED BRAML AND BRIGITTE BRAML ENTERING
MAHAKULUNG

Last cover photo: Sherpa Girl in Mountain Area
OCTOBER 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

The Partners Nepal (TPN) conducted a field visit to Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, and Sankhuwasabha from 8–19 October 2025. The delegation included Chairman Ang Rita Sherpa, Secretary Bheem Raj Rai, Treasurer Bhala Kaji Kulung, and donors Manfred and Brigitte Braml from Germany.

The visit focused on reviewing ongoing projects, identifying areas for improvement, and exploring opportunities for future collaboration. The team witnessed the positive impact of TPN’s initiatives and gained valuable insights into community needs and challenges. TPN remains dedicated to promoting sustainable development and enhancing the quality of life for people in eastern Nepal.

“TPN team with donors Manfred and Brigitte Braml during the October 2025 field visit to Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, and Sankhuwasabha, reviewing projects and exploring future opportunities.”

From 8–19 October 2025, The Partners Nepal team, together with donors Manfred and Brigitte Braml from Germany, visited Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, and Sankhuwasabha. The trip highlighted the impact of ongoing projects, community needs, and future opportunities for collaboration in promoting sustainable development.

2. OBJECTIVE OF FIELD VISIT

The primary objective of the field trip to Solukhumbu and Bhojpur was to review key community-based programs. The team visited the newly completed Chisapani Community Pond in Nechasalyan, school support initiatives at Jalapa Secondary School, the Sir Edmund Hillary Memorial Museum in Bung, the *One Day One Tree* reforestation sites, and the community pond and horticulture support projects in Chheskam.

In addition, the team explored the potential of developing a Trekking Guidebook for the Salpa–Arun region to generate economic opportunities for local lodges and communities. The trip successfully achieved its objectives, reaffirming The Partners Nepal’s commitment to sustainable development and to improving the lives of people in the region.

3. COMMUNITY POND AT CHISAPANI, NECHA

The team visited the Chisapani Community Pond, a landmark project completed in July 2025 and formally handed over to the Community Forest Users Group. This restored pond, once dried out for decades, now serves as a vital source of water for irrigation, livestock, and local households, while also standing as a model for climate change adaptation in the region. Donors Manfred and Brigitte Braml were able to witness firsthand how this community-led initiative is not only improving daily livelihoods but also strengthening resilience against the impacts of global warming.

Before



After



4. JALAPA SECONDARY SCHOOL IN NECHA

After visiting the Chisapani Community Pond, the team observed TPN's school support initiatives at Jalapa Secondary School in Necha. The newly constructed boundary fencing has created a safe and secure environment for students, protecting them from outside disturbances. Classroom improvements, including reinforced walls and better insulation, have transformed the learning spaces into warmer, brighter, and more welcoming environments. These changes not only enhance student safety and comfort but also motivate children to attend school regularly and focus on their studies, giving them greater hope for the future.





5. SIR EDMUND HILLARY MEMORIAL MUSEUM AND ELDERLY CARE CENTER IN BUNG

With generous support from Sir Edmund Hillary Stiftung Deutschland, NepalHilfe Tirol, Engage Nepal, Light Educational Development (LED), the Omotani Caring Foundation (OCF), and individual donors including Peter Nichols and Manfred and Brigitte Braml, The Partners Nepal (TPN) has helped conserve and restore the health post originally established by Sir Edmund Hillary in 1989. Built to serve families in southern Solukhumbu—then several days’ walk from the nearest medical care—the post was a lifeline and a source of pride for both the community and Sir Edmund Hillary himself.

The devastating 2015 earthquake caused the building to collapse, leaving the community without vital services. Responding to local appeals, TPN, together with its donors and the Hill Development Conservation Group, revitalized the site and transformed it into the Sir Edmund Hillary Memorial Museum and Elder Care Centre. Today, it stands as both a healthcare facility and a living tribute to Hillary’s legacy.

The center now provides essential medical care to the Rai community and residents of Bung, Chheskam, Gudel, Sotang, and Pawai (Mahakulung Rural Municipality Wards 1–5), where government services were once absent. It also offers dignity and shelter to the elderly who have no family to care for them. Of its ten beds, seven are currently occupied by vulnerable elders—three men and four women from the Rai and Blacksmith communities—who now receive regular meals, warmth, and compassionate care.



This transformation has not only preserved an important piece of local history but also created a beacon of resilience, community solidarity, and sustainable service in one of Nepal's most remote regions.



@ Meeting with Shree Dhoj Rai who was the second clinic incharge in Bung







6. ONE DAY ONE TREE AND COMMUNITY POND IN CHHESKAM

Since 2018, The Partners Nepal (TPN) has been working in Chheshkam, Mahakulung-3, Solukhumbu, to restore degraded forests by planting native species on both public and private lands under the leadership of Treasurer and local resident, Mr. Bhala Kaji. Thanks to strong community ownership and care, nearly 90% of the trees have survived—an impressive success that is already greening once-barren slopes, reducing erosion, and restoring vital habitat. During their recent visit, Manfred and Brigitte Braml witnessed the thriving plantations after a three-hour uphill trek, inspiring local pride and renewed commitment to conservation.

Building on this achievement, the residents of Chheshkam have now requested TPN's support to construct a community pond. This pond would provide a reliable source of irrigation for crops, attract eco-tourism, and serve as a climate adaptation measure to buffer against unpredictable rainfall and global warming. Together, the reforestation and the community pond represent a holistic conservation effort: trees stabilizing the land, water securing livelihoods, and both initiatives offering resilience and opportunities for future generations.

These efforts show how grassroots action, when supported by committed partners, can transform remote mountain communities—restoring nature, strengthening livelihoods, and creating living examples of climate change adaptation in practice.



@ One Day One Tree and Community Pond supported by The Partners Nepal





7. HORTICULTURE SUPPORT IN CHHESKAM

In addition to reforestation and the community pond, The Partners Nepal in collaboration with the Chamlang Society Youth Group, has introduced horticulture as another climate adaptation and livelihood initiative in Chheskam. Around **300 orange and lemon seedlings** were planted on abandoned lands—areas once left unused due to heavy out-migration. By transforming these neglected plots into productive orchards, the community is laying the foundation for future income generation, particularly as road access gradually improves.

This horticultural initiative represents more than just planting fruit trees; it symbolizes hope and opportunity. The orchards promise to diversify livelihoods, reduce dependency on forest resources, and encourage younger generations to see value in their ancestral lands. Donors Manfred and Brigitte Braml also visited the horticulture sites, witnessing firsthand how small but strategic interventions can bring new life to abandoned terrain, turning challenges like out-migration into opportunities for resilience and sustainable development.







@ Horticulture supported in Chheskam by The Partners Nepal

8. BUNG VILLAGE (SOLUKHUMBU DISTRICT)

Bung is an attractive village in Nepal's Solukhumbu District along the GHT Lower Route. Situated at 1,700 meters, it is surrounded by undulating hills, dense forests, and terraced fields that create a tranquil setting. Predominantly inhabited by the Rai and Kulung communities, Bung offers trekkers gracious hospitality, distinctive traditions, and vibrant festivals. Renowned for its traditional agricultural practices and artisanal skills, the village allows visitors to unwind, enjoy breathtaking vistas of the mid-hills and distant peaks, and immerse themselves in Nepal's rural culture. According to local residents, Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay used this route during their historic first summit of Mount Everest in 1953.



9. CHHESKAM, MAHAKULUNG-1 (SOLUKHUMBU)

Chheskam is a vibrant Rai settlement in Mahakulung Rural Municipality–1, Solukhumbu, perched at 1,950 meters on the lower routes to both Makalu–Barun and the Salpa–Arun Trails. Unlike many neighboring villages, Chheskam offers an exceptional blend of **cultural richness, biodiversity, and accessibility**, making it an ideal hub for conservation, eco-tourism, and community-based development.



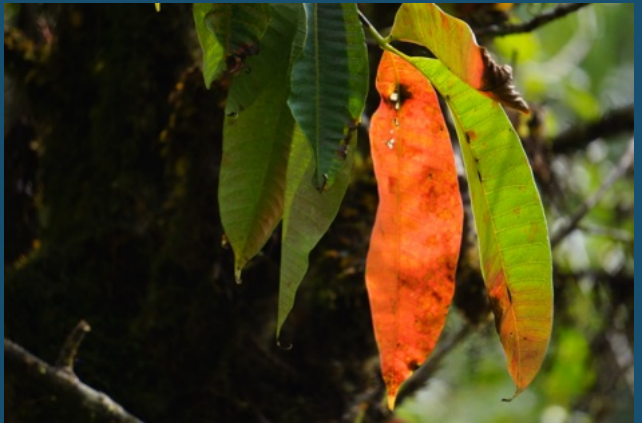
The majority of residents are Rai, whose Kirati traditions, oral histories, and nature-based rituals remain deeply rooted in everyday life. Colorful festivals, music, and dances continue to be celebrated with enthusiasm, creating an authentic cultural experience for visitors. While many surrounding villages face rapid cultural erosion and depopulation, Chheskam has preserved its **strong cultural identity** and communal spirit.

Ecologically, Chheskam occupies a unique corridor between **Sagarmatha and Makalu–Barun National Parks**, giving it extraordinary biodiversity. Its forests yield timber, medicinal herbs, bamboo, nettle, and daphne (used in traditional Lokta paper and fiber), resources that not all nearby villages can claim in such abundance. This wealth of natural resources, if managed sustainably, makes Chheskam a stronger candidate for eco-tourism and conservation initiatives compared to its neighbors.

In recent years, The Partners Nepal (TPN), together with the Chamlang Society Youth Group, has actively supported reforestation and horticulture projects here, achieving a **90% tree survival rate** and introducing orange and lemon plantations on abandoned lands—turning out-migration challenges into income-generating opportunities. Community members are now looking ahead to a multi-purpose community pond that will further enhance irrigation, tourism, and climate resilience.

With its **strategic location, intact traditions, rich biodiversity, and proactive community leadership**, Chheskam represents a more promising setting than many neighboring villages—one where conservation, culture, and livelihoods intersect, offering a model for sustainable development in the lower Solukhumbu region.





10.POTENTIAL OF HIGH-ALTITUDE TREKKING VIA CHHESKAM - MERA PEAK - AMPHULAP TSA - CHHUKUNG

The trekking route from **Chheskam (Mahakulung Rural Municipality)** to **Khumbu** via **Mera Peak (6,476 m)**, the **Amphulaptsa Pass (5,845 m)**, and **Chhukung** offers one of the most spectacular yet less-crowded high-altitude experiences in eastern Nepal. This trail combines cultural immersion in remote Rai and Sherpa villages with challenging alpine terrain, making it a unique alternative to the traditional Everest Base Camp trek.

- **Adventure Potential:** The crossing of **Mera Peak** and **Amphulaptsa** provides an exceptional mix of peak climbing and technical pass crossing, suitable for trekkers seeking high-altitude adventure.
- **Scenic Value:** The route offers stunning panoramas of **Everest, Lhotse, Makalu, Cho Oyu, and Kanchenjunga**, along with pristine valleys and glaciers.
- **Cultural Encounters:** Starting in **Chheskam**, trekkers experience Rai culture, gradually entering Sherpa settlements in Khumbu, providing a blend of traditions and lifestyles along one continuous trail.
- **Tourism Diversification:** Promoting this route can **reduce trekking pressure on Lukla–Namche–EBC trail**, spreading economic benefits to less-visited communities such as Chheskam and Inkhu Valley.
- **Sustainability:** Community-based lodges, homestays, and local guiding services can ensure that tourism revenues directly support rural livelihoods, reforestation, and climate adaptation initiatives.

With careful development and promotion, this high-altitude route could become a **world-class trekking and climbing corridor**, combining adventure tourism, cultural richness, and environmental stewardship in the Khumbu region.





11.GUDEL VILLAGE (SOLUKHUMBU DISTRICT)



@ Gudel Rai Village in Solukhumbu

Gudel Village – A Cultural Gem in Solukhumbu

After a scenic one-and-a-half-hour drive from Chheskam, travelers arrive in **Gudel**, a pure Rai community settlement nestled in the mid-hills of Solukhumbu District at an elevation of 1,900 meters. We stopped here for lunch before proceeding to Sonam village. This picturesque village is framed by lush green forests, cascading terraces of millet, maize, and paddy, and traditional stone-roofed dwellings that perfectly reflect rural Himalayan life.

Gudel is renowned for its **authentic Kirati Rai culture**, where age-old customs, oral histories, and nature-based rituals continue to shape everyday life. Visitors are often welcomed with warm hospitality, vibrant traditional dances, and the rhythmic sounds of drums and bamboo flutes during local festivals. Sherpa families living alongside the Rai add to the village's cultural mosaic, offering a unique blend of traditions.

The village also offers breathtaking **panoramic views of the Hinku Valley**, rolling hills, and distant snow peaks, making it a refreshing stop for trekkers exploring the **Great Himalayan Trail Cultural Route**. Here, one can savor **local delicacies** prepared from organic produce, sip millet beer (tongba), and exchange stories with villagers who have lived for generations in harmony with their land and forests.

What makes Gudel truly special is its **tranquil charm and living heritage**—a place where time slows down, culture thrives, and the natural beauty of Nepal's midhills is on full display. For trekkers and culture enthusiasts alike, Gudel is more than a resting point; it is an immersion into the heart of Himalayan tradition.

12.SANAM VILLAGE OF (SOLUKHUMBU DISTRICT)

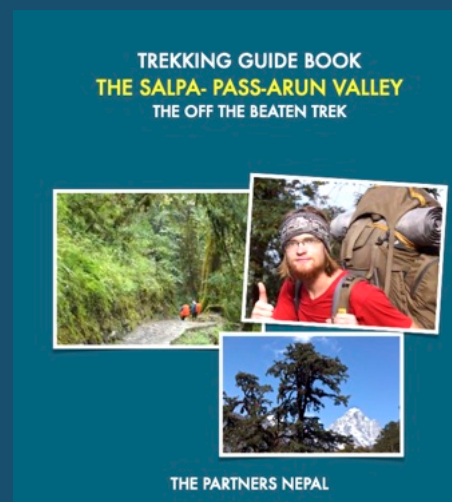


After lunch in Gudel, the journey continues to **Tiu and onward to Sanam**, a delightful Sherpa village in Solukhumbu District perched at **2,600 meters**. Nestled amidst terraced fields, lush forests, and rolling green hills, Sanam offers trekkers a tranquil retreat in the heart of Nepal’s mid-hills. Known for its **genuine Sherpa hospitality**, Sanam welcomes visitors with traditional cuisine, warm smiles, and a glimpse into age-old customs that remain deeply rooted in daily life. The village is not only a resting point but also a cultural experience, where travelers can engage with local traditions and enjoy the slower pace of Himalayan rural life. For those exploring the **Great Himalayan Trail (Lower Route)**, Sanam is an ideal stop—combining cultural richness, natural beauty, and peaceful surroundings that make the trek all the more memorable.

13.SALPA-ARUN TRAILS EXPLORATION

After completing project visits in Solukhumbu, the team trekked along the Salpa-Arun Trails to explore opportunities for community-based tourism, initiated by TPN in partnership with the Great Himalayan Trails (GHT). The goal is to publish a guidebook promoting this lesser-known route as an alternative to the crowded Sagarmatha National Park trails.

Salpa La (Kuluphangkha), at 3,350m (10,991ft), lies on the border of Solukhumbu and Bhojpur districts. Just 20 minutes from the pass is the sacred Salpa Pokhari, a revered mountain lake.



To reach the pass, we followed the north bank of the Lirung River for about 30 minutes, crossed a bridge, and then ascended for an hour and a half through dense fir and rhododendron forests. Salpa Pass marks the divide between the Hongu and Arun River watersheds. On a clear day, the panorama is spectacular, stretching from Everest on the northwest horizon to Kanchenjunga in the northeast.

The Salpa-Arun trek links the Khumbu region with the Arun Valley and Makalu-Barun National Park, offering rich biodiversity, cultural heritage, and unspoiled natural beauty. Rated medium to hard, it is ideal for experienced trekkers seeking remoteness and adventure.

TPN, together with HDCG, is preparing a detailed map and guidebook to highlight the area's unique flora, fauna, and cultural traditions, with the aim of fostering community-based ecotourism that supports local livelihoods and conservation.







14.SALPA-LAKE



@ Salpa Pokhari (Sacred Lake)

Salpa Pokhari (Sacred Lake)

Salpa Pokhari is a revered high-altitude lake located at **3,443 meters** on the border of Solukhumbu and Bhojpur districts, along the Salpa-Arun trekking trail. Just below the Salpa La (Kuluphangkha) Pass, the lake is considered one of the most important pilgrimage sites in eastern Nepal.

The lake holds deep spiritual significance for multiple faiths.

- **For Kirati communities**, it is a sacred site linked to ancestral worship and nature-based rituals.
- **For Buddhists**, it is a place of meditation and blessings, associated with the presence of deities.
- **For Hindus**, the lake is believed to purify the soul, especially during holy bathing rituals.

Each year during **Janai Purnima (August)** and **Chaite Purnima (April)**, thousands of pilgrims from Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, Khotang, and Sankhuwasabha—as well as visitors from India—gather here to worship, bathe, and celebrate. These festivals transform the remote alpine setting into a vibrant hub of cultural and religious expression.

Beyond its spiritual role, Salpa Pokhari is also valued for its natural beauty. The crystal-clear waters are surrounded by rhododendron and fir forests, home to diverse flora and fauna. On clear days, visitors can enjoy sweeping views of the eastern Himalayas, from **Everest** to **Kanchenjunga**. Salpa Pokhari represents a unique blend of **cultural heritage and biodiversity**, making it both a sacred destination for pilgrims and an attractive site for eco-cultural tourism along the Salpa-Arun Trails.





15.SILICHUNG PEAK (4,155 M), BHOJPUR DISTRICT





Silichung Peak, rising to **4,155 meters**, is one of the most prominent high points in **Bhojpur District**, located along the historic **Salpa–Arun Trail**. The peak is a sacred and culturally significant site for both **Hindu and Buddhist communities**. It overlooks the legendary **Salpa Pokhari (3,410 m)**, a holy alpine lake visited by thousands of pilgrims during *Janai Purnima* and *Mansa Puja*.

From the summit, visitors are rewarded with a **panoramic Himalayan view**—including **Mount Everest, Makalu, Kanchenjunga, Cho Oyu, and other peaks**—as well as sweeping vistas of the Arun Valley and surrounding mid-hills. Because of its location at the crossroads of Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, and Sankhuwasabha, Silichung has historically been a sacred meeting point for traders, herders, and devotees traveling through eastern Nepal.

The peak holds deep spiritual value for the **Rai (Kulung, Bantawa, Chamling) communities**, whose *Mundhum* traditions revere it as a seat of protective deities. Buddhist pilgrims also make offerings here, considering the mountain a sacred guardian of the Salpa region. Local oral history connects the peak with ancient shamanic practices and seasonal rituals tied to harvests, livestock, and community well-being.

Ecologically, the Silichung highlands support **alpine meadows, rhododendron forests, and medicinal plants**, providing habitat for rare species such as **red panda, musk deer, and Himalayan monal**. The area is also an important watershed for downstream communities, though it faces increasing pressures from **climate change, deforestation, and shrinking water sources**.

Today, Silichung Peak is not only a **spiritual landmark** but also a potential hub for **eco-cultural tourism**. Pilgrims, trekkers, and researchers alike are drawn by its unique blend of sacred landscapes, indigenous traditions, and biodiversity, making it a living symbol of resilience and harmony between people and nature in eastern Nepal.



16. POTENTIAL OF COMMUNITY-BASED AND CULTURAL TOURISM IN THE SALPA-ARUN TRAIL

1. Strategic Location and Historic Significance

- The Salpa–Arun Trail connects **Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, and Sankhuwasabha districts**, serving as a traditional trade and pilgrimage route for centuries.
- Key attractions include **Salpa Pokhari (3,410 m)**, **Silichung Peak (4,155 m)**, and culturally rich settlements like **Silichung, Phedi, Bung, and Chheskam**.
- The trail links mid-hill villages to the high Himalaya, offering a blend of ecological diversity and cultural richness.

2. Cultural Tourism Opportunities

- The region is home to diverse ethnic groups: **Rai (Kulung, Bantawa, Chamling), Sherpa, Tamang, Gurung, and others**, each with unique traditions, languages, dances, and rituals.
- Traditional *Mundhum* (oral spiritual practices of the Rai) and Buddhist festivals attract pilgrims and can be shared respectfully with visitors.
- **Sacred sites** such as Salpa Pokhari and Silichung Peak draw thousands of Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims annually, creating opportunities for **pilgrimage-based eco-tourism**.
- Traditional crafts like **allo (Himalayan nettle) weaving**, bamboo work, and local cuisine can be promoted through homestays and cultural programs.

3. Ecotourism and Natural Heritage

- The trail passes through **alpine meadows, rhododendron forests, and biodiversity hotspots** that are home to red panda, Himalayan monal, and medicinal plants.
- Eco-trekking circuits can be developed to connect with the **Makalu-Barun National Park, Sagarmatha National Park, and Arun Valley**, creating regional tourism linkages.
- **Community forestry groups** already protect large tracts of forest, offering models for eco-tourism revenue-sharing.

4. Community-Based Tourism (CBT) Potential

- **Homestay programs** in villages like Silichung, Chheskam, and Bung could generate direct income for local families while preserving cultural authenticity.
- **Youth groups and women's cooperatives** can lead in guiding, hospitality, handicraft sales, and cultural performances.
- Tourism revenue can strengthen **local conservation projects** (reforestation, pond restoration, water management) while reducing migration pressures.

5. Challenges to Address

- Limited **infrastructure** (roads, lodges, communication, waste management) needs improvement for safe tourism.
- Ensuring **sustainable practices** is vital to avoid cultural commodification and environmental degradation.
- Marketing and promotion remain weak; the trail is less known internationally compared to Everest or Annapurna regions.
- **Capacity building** is needed for local guides, homestay operators, and youth groups to meet visitor expectations.

6. Future Potential

- With proper planning, the Salpa–Arun Trail can be developed as a **model of low-impact, community-owned tourism** in eastern Nepal.
- Integrating **climate change adaptation projects** (e.g., reforestation, community ponds, sustainable agriculture) into tourism narratives will appeal to responsible travelers.

17. PHEDI, BHOJPUR

Phedi, located in Bhojpur District along the Salpa-Arun trekking trail, is a traditional transit village at the base of **Salpa La Pass (3,350 m)**. The name *Phedi* itself means “foot” or “base” in Nepali, reflecting its position as the resting point before the long climb toward Salpa La or the descent into the Arun Valley.



Historically, Phedi served as a **trading and resting hub** for travelers, herders, and pilgrims journeying between Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, and Sankhuwasabha. Even today, it remains an important stop for trekkers on the off-the-beaten-path Salpa-Arun route, offering basic accommodation and a glimpse of the Rai community’s traditional lifestyle.

Surrounded by terraced farmlands, forests, and ridges, Phedi is home to indigenous **Rai, Sherpa, and other hill communities**, who maintain a close connection with their land and forests. The area is rich in cultural traditions, festivals, and hospitality, making it a memorable stopover for visitors seeking authentic local experiences.

Phedi is not only a gateway to **Salpa Pokhari and Silichung** but also a key point linking the cultural and natural landscapes of Bhojpur with the greater Himalayan trekking network. With growing interest in **community-based ecotourism**, Phedi has the potential to become a sustainable tourism hub that supports both conservation and livelihoods.

18. KHANDBARI



Khandbari (Sankhuwasabha District)

- **Elevation:** ~1,045 m
- **Location:** District headquarters of Sankhuwasabha, eastern Nepal; a gateway town for treks to Makalu Base Camp and the Arun Valley.
- **Access:** About 3–4 hours' walk uphill from Tumlingtar Airport, which has regular flights from Kathmandu.

Overview:

Khandbari is the bustling administrative and commercial hub of Sankhuwasabha District. As the main service center of the Arun Valley region, it offers banks, shops, schools, health facilities, and government offices, making it a crucial stop for trekkers and local residents alike.

Culture & People:

The town is home to diverse communities, including Rai, Sherpa, Newar, Gurung, and Tamang. Festivals such as **Dashain**, **Tihar**, **Sakela**, and **Lhosar** are celebrated widely, reflecting the cultural richness of the area.

Highlights for Trekkers:

- Starting point for the **Makalu Base Camp trek** (8,463 m, the world's fifth-highest peak) and alternative routes into the Arun Valley.
- Good place to rest, resupply, or hire porters and guides before heading into more remote areas.
- Views of the Arun Valley and surrounding hills from the ridges above the town.
- Local markets offering fresh produce, traditional goods, and trekking essentials.

Why Visit:

Though not a typical tourist town, Khandbari serves as an important staging point for adventures into Makalu-Barun National Park and the Salpa-Arun Trails. Its lively atmosphere and cultural diversity provide trekkers with a glimpse into everyday hill-town life in eastern Nepal.

19.CONCLUSION

Respected donors Manfred and Brigitte Braml accepted our invitation to visit lower Solukhumbu to review TPN-initiated projects, including the Chisapani Community Pond, school support in Necha, the Sir Edmund Hillary Memorial Museum and Elderly Care Center in Bung, and reforestation, community pond, and horticulture support in Chheskam. Both expressed a strong interest in seeing TPN's work in Solukhumbu and Sankhuwasabha.

To facilitate this, we planned visits to Nechasalyan, Bung, and Chheskam, where TPN has received generous support for conservation, education, elderly care, climate change adaptation, and horticulture projects. Funding has come from organizations such as Sir Edmund Hillary Stiftung Deutschland, NepalHilfe Tirol, Engage Nepal, Omotani Caring Foundation, Light Educational Development, as well as individual supporters including Peter Nichols and Manfred Braml, enabling the establishment of the Sir Edmund Hillary Memorial Elderly Home.

During this trip, we also explored areas beyond Solukhumbu along the Salpa–Arun Trail in Bhojpur and Sankhuwasabha districts, highlighting its potential for community-based tourism and conservation. We found that this is a moderately difficult trek through a diverse region of eastern Nepal, linking Solukhumbu with the Arun Valley. The Salpa–Arun Trail, spanning Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, and Sankhuwasabha, is a moderately difficult trek that connects the Solukhumbu region with the Arun Valley.

Unlike the crowded Everest and Mera routes, it offers a peaceful journey through rhododendron forests, terraced fields, and the Salpa La Pass (3,400 m), with views of Makalu and Everest. Culturally rich and less explored, the trail passes through diverse ethnic villages, with Salpa Bhanjyang as its highest point.

“Experience the lower belt’s cultural villages—where community-based tourism uplifts livelihoods and reveals diverse landscapes, heritage, and traditions.”

The people of this lower belt aspire to promote cultural and community-based tourism in their beautiful village settlements. This will not only improve their living conditions and create livelihood opportunities but also allow visitors to experience diverse landscapes, natural beauty, and rich cultural heritage.

20.ITINERARY FOR SOLUKHUMBU AND SALPA-ARUN

SN	DATE	FROM	TO	REMARKS
1	8th October 2025	Kathmandu	Patale	Driving through Charikot, Manthali
2	9th October 2025	Patale	Mukli	Driving and had visited the community pond and school in Necha
3	10th October 2025	Muklit	Bung	Driving to Bung and stopped at Sotang
4	11th October 2025	Bung	Chheskam	Drove to Chheskam after visiting Sir Edmund Hillary Memorial Musuem
5	12th October 2025	Chheskam	Chheskam	Visited One Day One Tree project and community pond
6	13th October 2025	Chheskam	Sonam	Driving and had lunch in Gudel
7	14th October 2025	Sonam	Salpa pass	Walk for 4 hours to Salpa Pass
8	15th October 2025	Salpa	Salpa	Walk to Silichung
9	16th October 2025	Salpa	Phedi	Walk and lunch at Jaubari
10	17th October 2025	Phedi	Khandbari	Driving and had lunch in Tumlingtar
11	18th October 2025	Khandbari	Khandbari	Market day and had lunch at Homestay
12	19th October 2025	Khandbari	Kathmandu	Flyout

Photo: MANFRED BRAML AND BRIGITTE BRAML AT SILICHUNG PEAK

171 Mahapur Marg
Bansbari, Kathmandu, Nepal
www.thepartnersnepal.org



www.thepartnersnepal.org
Facebook: [thepartnersnepal.org](https://www.facebook.com/thepartnersnepal.org)
Pan No: 602789196

THE PARTNERS NEPAL