janma
CHILDRENS' EDUCATION FUND
PLNN HOSPITAL LUKLA NEPAL

News 2026



„Empowering mothers, saving lives – become a member of Janma!"
A project of the Fondation Nicole Niquille – www.janma.org

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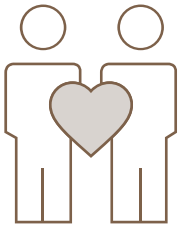
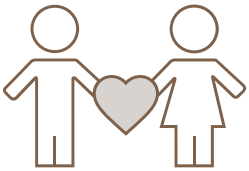
A full house at the ninth Janma Day: On 17 April 2026, 218 children came to Lukla, and together with their parents, nearly 500 people attended.

Current sponsorship status



330 sponsors



428 sponsored children

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Become a sponsor or make a donation?

Many children are currently waiting for a sponsor. Whether you choose a sponsorship or a one-off donation, every contribution helps. We look forward to hearing from you. You can find more information at **www.janma.org**

Dear sponsors, friends and families,

2026 was a year of contrasts for Nepal. At the end of August, massive flash floods devastated the Bhotekoshi and Trishuli valleys in the north of the country. Thousands of people lost their lives or are still missing. Many families from Lukla also lost loved ones. In this newsletter, Nicole Niquille describes how her foundation is helping the children who lost their parents in the floods. Moments like these show how important a reliable network of education, medical care and community is.

The encounters in spring were all the more heartwarming. From 8 to 22 April, I was in Nepal together with Sophia and our two daughters, Josephine and Maria. On 17 April, we celebrated the ninth Janma Day in Lukla, together with Pasang Lhamu and a team she had put together especially for the occasion. Of the 307 children invited, 218 gathered in front of the hospital. Including their parents, nearly 500 people were there. For many of the children who now live in Kathmandu, we had already received photos in advance. As every year, we checked every child's details and took new photos. There was some waiting, but the atmosphere was cheerful and relaxed.

This year, too, sponsors set out to meet their sponsored children. Samuel Gendre, a lower secondary teacher at the Cycle d'orientation de Sarine Ouest in the canton of Fribourg, visited the seven children supported by the school's pupils on the school's behalf. Pauline Robert and Sylvain Chételat met their sponsored child's family during their trek. Their stories show what Janma is all about: a bond that goes far beyond financial support.

In spring, Pasang Lhamu Sherpa decided to step down as administrative director of the PLNN Hospital. Over many years, she played a key role in the hospital's success. Fortunately, she remains with us as the person in charge of the Janma project. She will continue to coordinate everything on the ground and be there for the children and their families. Pasang has a large network in the region and is wholeheartedly committed to the women and children of the Solukhumbu. We are very happy and grateful that we can continue to count on her.

The Janma family keeps growing steadily: as in the previous year, 35 new children have joined us. Only the number of new sponsors isn›t quite keeping up ;-) We currently have more sponsored children than sponsors. We would be grateful for any help in spreading the word. Tell your family, friends and acquaintances about Janma – perhaps there's still room for a sponsorship under the Christmas tree.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all our sponsors, donors and friends for their loyalty. Without you, none of this would be possible. Together, we will continue to support the children and families of the Solukhumbu, step by step, year by year.

With warmest thanks and best wishes for the festive season.

On behalf of the Janma team. Namaste



Rob Lewis



Fabienne Kaupert

From Fribourg to Lukla: A sponsor visits his sponsored children



Travelling on behalf of his school: Samuel Gendre with Lhopsang Sherpa, one of the seven sponsored children the Cycle d›orientation de Sarine Ouest has supported since 2023.

During a trip through Nepal between late May and early June, I was lucky enough to meet the children and families in Lukla who have been supported since Christmas 2023 by the Cycle d›orientation de Sarine Ouest, a lower secondary school in the canton of Fribourg. I work at this school. The money raised by our pupils, around 16,000 Swiss francs, covers the schooling of seven children: mainly uniforms, meals and school supplies, which their parents would otherwise have to pay for.

When I arrive in Lukla, Pasang Lhamu welcomes me at the guesthouse she runs with her husband, Namgyal. This is where guides and porters returning from Everest meet up, play snooker and share a little about their daily lives. Pasang Lhamu is very busy during the Dumji festival, which is very important to the Sherpa community. Even so, she takes the time to accompany me to visit the five sponsored children who live in Lukla. Her presence is invaluable when the families don't speak English.

Sometimes the whole extended family is gathered, grandparents included. Elsewhere, I meet just one parent with their child. Several generations often live under one roof. We don't speak the same language, but the gestures, the smiles and the hospitality make these encounters deeply moving.

A few days later, I hike to Namche Bazaar to visit Da Tenji and Yuti Sherpa, the parents of little Chhiring. They have lived there for four years and run Sherpa Fast Food, a modest eatery where they serve momos, among other things. Chhiring is our youngest sponsored child and is growing up among the guests. She is full of energy, plays, shares her smile with everyone and even performs her own choreography when her mother plays the Nepali version of «Baby Shark».

The family lives where they work. On the ground floor are a small kitchen, a shop and the dining room. Yuti and Chhiring sleep in a small bed next to the kitchen, while Da Tenji and his father-in-law sleep on the large corner bench. The toilet is outside, and once a week they pay a friend a few rupees to use the shower in his guesthouse.

Finally, in Kopan near Kathmandu, I meet Sonam. Her family moved away from Lukla because tourism had made life there too expensive. Sonam is a healthy, thriving little girl. Her father, Dawa, jokes that she «costs» her parents a lot, she has such a good appetite. She is due to start school in two years, probably at a Montessori school in Kathmandu.

In all these encounters, I met attentive parents who care deeply about their children's wellbeing and future. They all know how important school and the support of the Janma project are. In Nepal, gratitude is not always expressed in words. People don't often say «Dhanyabad» in Nepali or «Thuche» in Sherpa, but gestures and looks speak for themselves. And so I travel home with a whole collection of khatas: scarves made of silk or synthetic fibres, given here as a sign of deep gratitude and respect. A few pieces of fabric for a handful of rupees, but above all a ritual that means far more in Nepal than words.

Samuel Gendre



Sonam Dolma Sherpa, born on 8 April 2024



Urgen Jangpo Sherpa, born on 26 April 2024



Phurba Chhiring Tamang, born on 30 May 2024



Utsang Tamang, born on 3 April 2024



Lhakpa Norlha Sherpa, born on 28 February 2024



Chhiring Yangjum Sherpa, born on 18 November 2024

From sponsorship to meeting in person: an interview with Pauline Robert & Sylvain Chételat



Pauline and Sylvain visiting their sponsored child in the Solukhumbu.

How did you hear about the Janma project?
Pauline had known about the hospital in Lukla founded by Nicole Niquille since she was a child. The idea of sponsoring a child touched her, and she had long wanted to do it. At the end of 2025, an article marking the hospital's 20th anniversary convinced us that the time had come to get involved.

What made you choose to support Janma rather than another organisation?
We were won over by Janma›s concrete and pragmatic approach. We also value the transparency: we can see directly who benefits from the financial support. Being able to stay in touch with our sponsored child and their family gives our commitment a human dimension. It creates a bond that goes far beyond a simple donation of money.

What made you decide to travel to Nepal?
Pauline wanted to see Nepal again, where she had spent several months as a volunteer, and Sylvain wanted to get to know the country. We're passionate about the mountains and wanted to combine cultural discovery with hiking in the Himalayas. Since our sponsored child lives in the Lukla region, it made sense to plan our trek there, with the prospect of meeting him in person.

Looking back on your trip today, what thought, feeling or memory comes to mind first? Or perhaps you have an anecdote to share with us?
The trip strengthened our connection with Nepal. Alongside the extraordinary landscapes, we were fortunate to build a relationship with our sponsored child's family. That made it a completely different experience from an ordinary tourist trip. Now we have just one wish: to go back as soon as possible.

Sylvain was also struck by the generosity and warmth of the people of Nepal. Despite the many hardships the country has faced in recent years, Nepalis maintain a remarkable outlook.

What would you say to someone who is still considering supporting Janma?
Our visit to the Pasang Lhamu Nicole Niquille Hospital in Lukla exceeded our expectations. Along the way, many locals told us about the excellent reputation the hospital enjoys in the region. Our sponsored child's mother even prefers to go there, although it means a four-hour walk, rather than to the health post just a few minutes from her home.

We are also convinced that education is a key lever for the sustainable development of a region. Today, giving birth in hospital seems a matter of course, but back then such a project was truly new and courageous. Its impact lives on today in the support it gives to children's schooling. In a region with so many tourists, we think it is essential that young people have access to education and acquire the skills they need for their future.

What's more, being able to visit your sponsored child gives the financial support a deeply human dimension. The commitment becomes tangible, and a personal relationship develops with the family you support.

Impressions from the ninth Janma Day



Families queuing for their annual portrait.



One of the 192 girls in the Janma programme.



It's always amazing how Pasang Lhamu keeps track of everything.



For more than 20 years, Nicole Niquille has been committed to the people of Nepal. Through her foundation, she founded the hospital in Lukla and is now also supporting children who lost their parents in the floods last August.

Hope for the children orphaned by the flash floods in the Trishuli Valley

On 26 August 2026, massive flash floods devastated the catchment areas of the Bhotekoshi and Trishuli rivers in northern Nepal. Two weeks later, on 9 September, the Nepali press reported that only 1'367 bodies had been recovered so far. At that point, the number of people officially reported missing stood at 5'137, and the true figure was certainly higher.

How many people waited in vain for a father's call? How many orphans are there today in this valley, less than 150 km as the crow flies from the Khumbu, where the hospital you support is located? Many families from Lukla have been affected: a father, a sister, a child who were in the wrong place at the wrong time, on the road to earn a living for their family.

In solidarity with the grieving families, the Fondation Nicole Niquille has decided to show the children that their pain is heard. We are providing financial support to an orphanage near Kathmandu that has taken in around ten children from the villages destroyed by the disaster.

Your support is immeasurably valuable. It brings new hope and helps lay the foundations for the future. It is far more than a financial contribution: it is a sign of compassion and of trust in our work. Thank you – Dhanyabad

Nicole Niquille

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