



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) talks about four different pillars of Child Rights – Survival, Development, Protection and Participation. While the first three are largely acknowledged and efforts are being made to secure these rights of children; the right to participation remains vague and tends to be used patronizingly.

What does it mean to have children participate in their homes, schools, and societies specifically in decision making? The answer to this remains elusive to us.

For long we have believed that children are the future citizens of the world, but honestly, they are our present; children have a lot of potential to bring about change if only we give them the space and platform to express themselves. Yet, we cannot be blamed for not having included children in decision making because we have struggled for a long time with not knowing how to. But CATS is an opportunity to figure it out in a collaborative manner.

About CATS

CATS (Children as Actors Transforming for Society) is an interactive 7 day event organized in Caux, Switzerland every year for the past 6 years. This unique envisions a world where children and adults are working together in mutual respect towards a more just, inclusive and sustainable society where all can realize their fundamental rights and fulfill their unique potential.

CATS aims to provide a space for children and young people to engage and exchange perspectives with adults; to enrich, challenge and expand their respective understanding and knowledge; and to create the potential for meaningful partnerships and participation. It is a rich, dynamic, experiential, inclusive and fun program co – designed, co – led and co – evaluated by children and adults.

The purpose of this program is to mainstream, celebrate and improve participatory collaboration between children and adults worldwide for the implementation of the rights of the child (UNCRC).

Why a Regional Forum?

CATS takes place at Caux in Switzerland, which is an expensive place to travel to and not everyone is able to afford the same. In this situation, maximum people were being left out and therefore, there arose the need to decentralize it in the form of Regional Forums.

The Regional Forum is an opportunity to reach out to more organizations and individuals, who advocate for children’s rights especially at the grassroots, to be linked to the CATS Global Forum by making it

more accessible to all. At this regional forum participants will be able to strengthen partnerships with local actors who share the same concerns and issues.

Why India?

India is a country of great diversity, but this diversity itself leads to a lot of issues – social, cultural and political. And within this diverse set up, we have 39 per cent of the country's population who are children. Given these two facts, this country is an ideal set up to create a learning lab to figure out how children can be more involved in the solutions. This clubbed with the fact that Initiatives of Change (IofC), Asia Plateau has a beautiful centre at Panchgani, Maharashtra, makes it the ideal location to begin a chapter of CATS Asia.

About the event – February 2019

CATS is an interactive workshop with sessions co – facilitated by children and adults. It comprises of various parts that facilitates learning or unlearning process in a holistic manner. **Together Times**, a plenary session, is where all the participants come together in a common space. The **Community Groups** will be classroom groups where participants are divided into smaller groups; the sessions in these groups will be focused on Child Rights and are the same for all. It is to facilitate participation that the groups are kept small. **Workshops** are sessions on different topics related to the theme of the Forum where participants can choose the topic they wish to understand in depth over the course of the event. Then there is **Let's Explore**, which is just one session during the course of the Forum which participants can select one medium of expression to learn that they can use to do advocacy.

Age criteria of participants: children and youth 11 to 18 years and accompanying adults over 18 years or child professional.

Other interesting elements of the event are as follows:

Human Library: Few participants will opt to take the role of a book and share their life stories and experiences, of their journey with its highs and lows, successes and challenges, with fellow participants.

Advocacy Action: The idea of CATS is to move beyond being a fun event where children and adults learn new things, and to take a step towards advocacy initiatives. Therefore, to demonstrate this there will be one activity conducted during the event, towards the end, to raise a voice on the issue.

Theme for the Conference in February 2019

“Safe and Sound”

Because a safe world for children is a sound world for all

10th to 16th February 2019

At Asia Plateau, Panchgani, Maharashtra, India

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For more information on our strategic partners, please visit:

IofC Asia Plateau India: <http://in.iofc.org/Asia-Plateau>

Shaishav: <http://shaishavchildrights.org/>

Caritas India: <http://caritasindia.org/>

PRATYeK/ NINEISMINE: <https://www.facebook.com/9isM9/>

THEMES FOR WORKSHOP'S:

- **Online safety of children**
- **Govt. laws and policies for protection of children in India**
- **Adult and children working together**
- **Mental health**
- **Counter culture**
- **Advocacy through child participation**
- **Inclusion**
- **Water, sanitation and hygiene**
- **Child trafficking**

TOPICS FOR LET'S EXPLORE:

- **Visual art**
- **Photography**
- **Performing arts**
- **Sign language**
- **Creative writing**
- **Circus art**

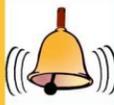


"Safe and Sound"

Because a safe world for children is a sound world for all



CATS ASIA FORUM 2019 PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Time/Date	SUNDAY 10 FEBRUARY	MONDAY 11 FEBRUARY	TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY	WEDNESDAY 13 FEBRUARY	THURSDAY 14 FEBRUARY	FRIDAY 15 FEBRUARY	SATURDAY 16 FEBRUARY
6:45 am	MORNING TEA	REGISTRATION	MORNING TEA	MORNING TEA	MORNING TEA	MORNING TEA	MORNING TEA
7:00 am			REFLECTION SESSION	REFLECTION SESSION	REFLECTION SESSION	MAMI PRAYER	FREE MORNING
8:00 am	BREAKFAST		BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST
9:15 am			COMMUNITY GROUP	INNER DEVELOPMENT	RELATIONSHIP	TOGETHER TIME Human Library	COMMUNITY GROUP
10:30 am			TEA	TEA	TEA	TEA	TEA
11:00 am		TOGETHER TIMES Opening	TOGETHER TIME	TOGETHER TIME	COMMUNITY GROUP	LET'S EXPLORE	TOGETHER TIME Closing
12:30 pm	ARRIVAL	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
2:30 pm		TREASURE HUNT	MARKET PLACE	COMMUNITY GROUP	STUDY TOUR	WORKSHOP Parallel workshop	DEPARTURE
4:00 pm		TEA	TEA	TEA	TEA	TEA	
4:30 - 6:00 pm		GAMES	WORKSHOP Parallel workshop	WORKSHOP Parallel workshop	STUDY TOUR	FREE TIME AT PANCHGANI	
7:00 pm	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	
8:00-9:00 pm		COMMUNITY GROUP	FILM FESTIVAL	CULTURAL NIGHT	CAMP FIRE AND JAM SESSION	TALENT EVENING	

