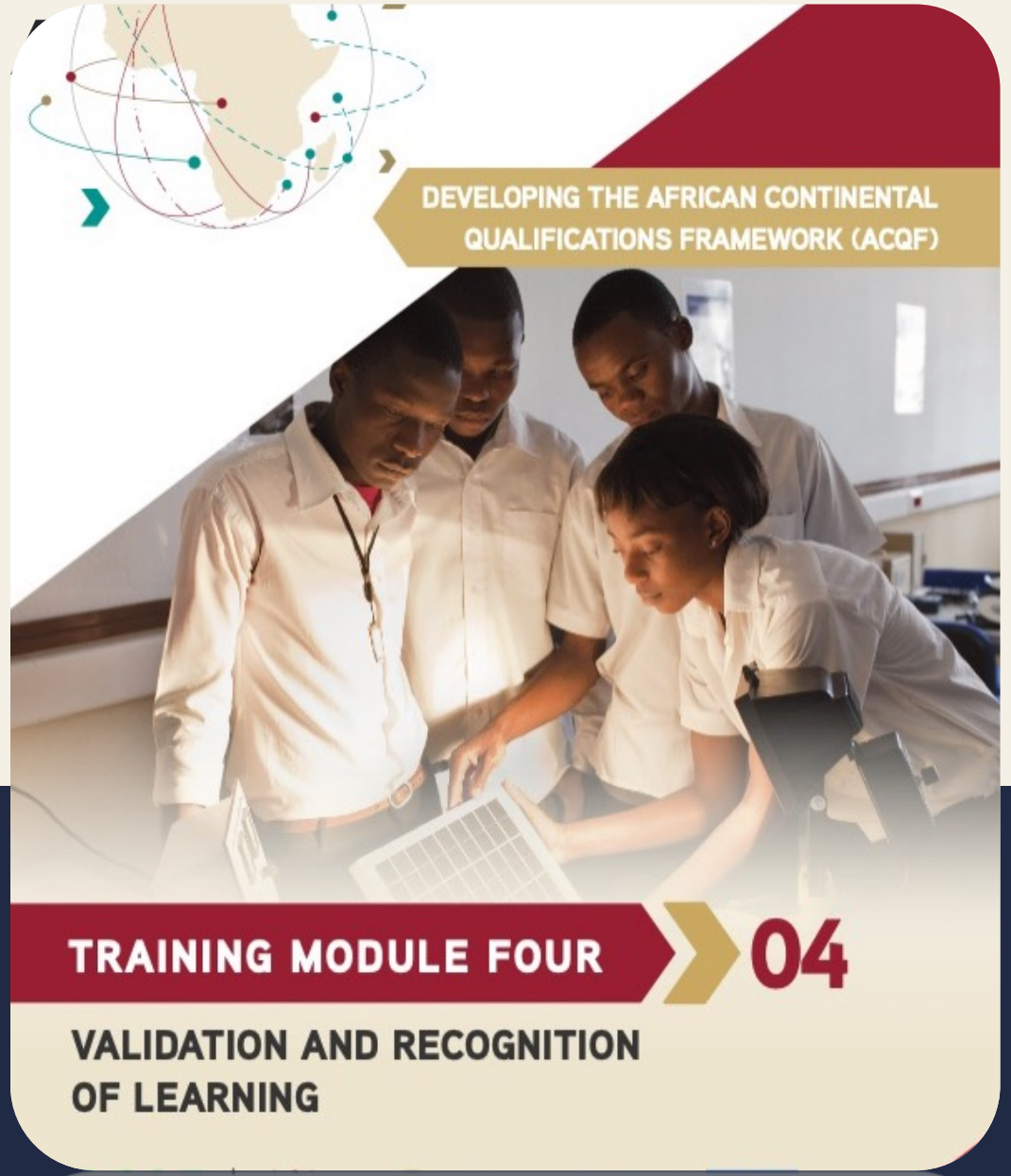

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African Continental Qualifications Framework

Session 18: Validation of Learning – CATS: Concepts, Policies, Application, Challenges

Training Module 4

7th September 2022

Johannesburg-South Africa

Facilitator: James Mwewa

Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS) is one of the modes for validating and recognising learning through the recognition of credits. CATS is a form of RPL used to recognise and validate formal learning

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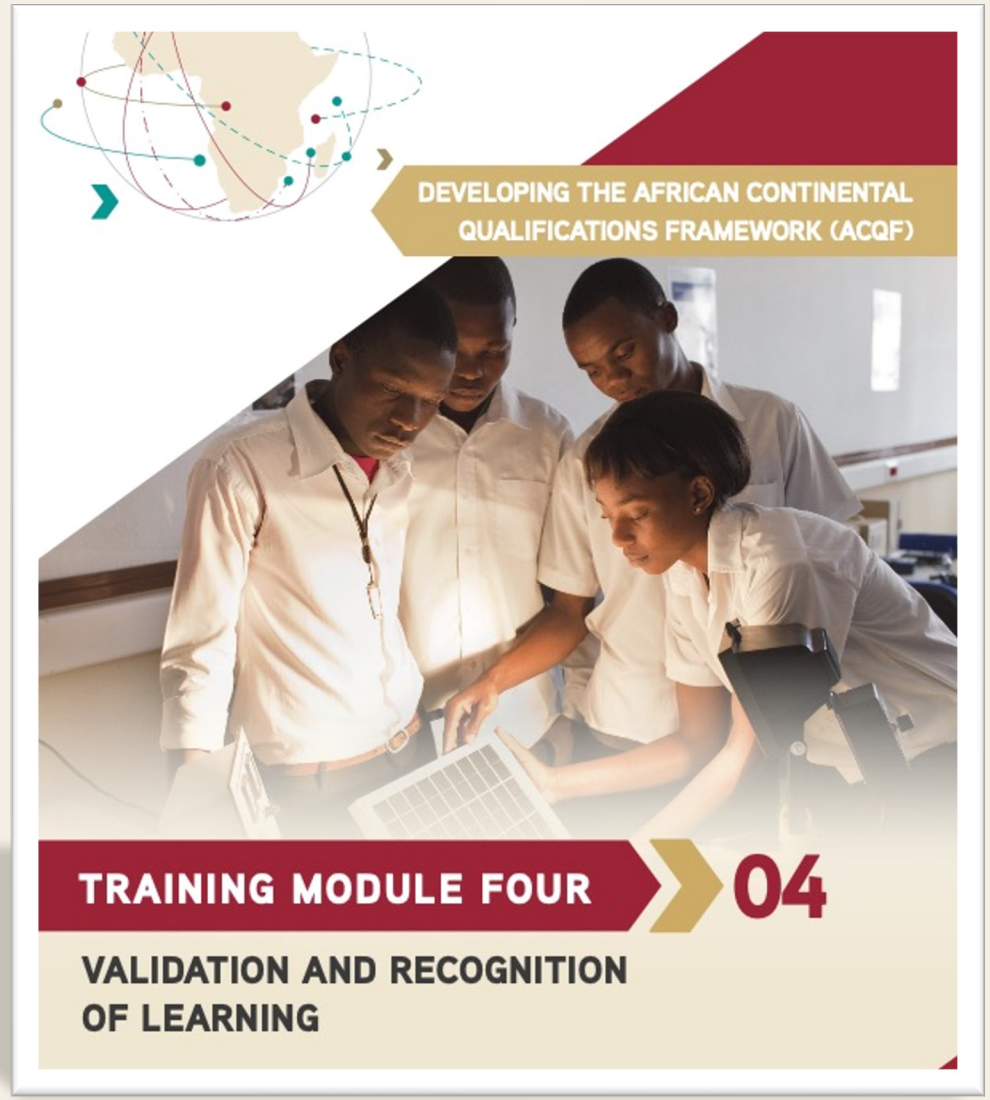


- **ACQF Training Module 4**

Available from ACQF website:

https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-4-validation-and-recognition-of-learning

01

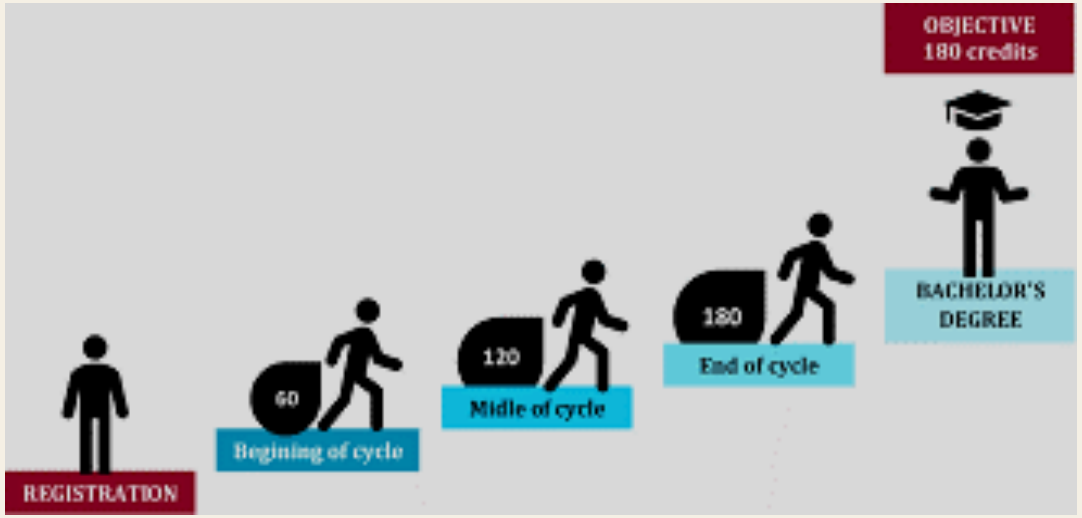
Introduction

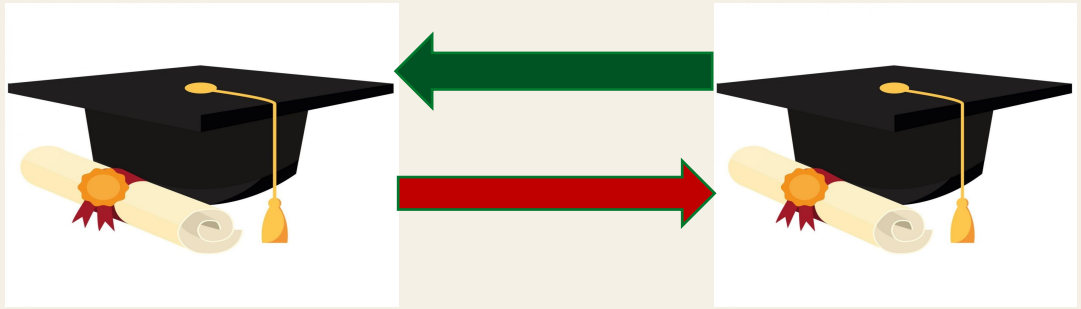
Topics to be covered

Participants will gain better appreciation of the following:

- What is CATS?
- Relationship between CATS and RPL
- Importance of CATS
- Key terms related to CATS
- Key principles of CATS
- CATS implementation stages
- Translation of study/ work hours into credits
- Quality Assurance of CATS
- Polls

What is CATS?





- Mode for validating and recognising learning through the recognition of credits
- Used to recognise and validate formal learning
- Systematic way of describing an educational programme by attaching credits to its components

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Key terms related to CATS

Credit	• Estimated workload an individual typically needs for achieving related learning outcomes
Credit accumulation	• Process of acquiring credits for learning towards a qualification
Credit transfer	• Process of allowing individuals who have accumulated credits in one context to have it valued and recognised in another context
Credit rating	• Process of determining a numerical value of a programme, course or module

02

CATS – An Overview

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Key principles of CATS

PRINCIPLE 1

CATS should be formulated with a view to promoting learner mobility across sectors, levels and types of qualifications by eliminating duplication of learning

PRINCIPLE 2

Systems and procedures developed in institutions to support CAT should be transparent, fair, flexible and easy to use

PRINCIPLE 3

Decisions regarding credit transfer should be timely, academically defensible and equitable, and based on learning outcomes.

PRINCIPLE 4

Credit awarded in recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning is of equal standing to credit awarded through formal learning

Key principles of CATS...cont'd

In line with the concept of institutional autonomy, CAT should not affect the authority of a receiving institution to make decisions about the admission of learners

Credit recognition and credit transfer should not undermine the academic rigour or integrity of the qualification into which the learner is accepted

Institutional commitment and cooperation is central to the optimal functionality of CATS

CATS and its procedures should be subject to rigorous quality assurance measures

Importance of CATS

03

CATS – Policies and Implementation

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Policies Guiding the Implementation of CATS

Document CAT Processes: rules and guidelines on how to compare learning outcomes, notional hours, content and competences should be clearly documented

Establish Internal Quality Committees: to regulate adherence of the CATS to requirements.

Develop Articulation and Access Procedures: progression within sub frameworks should be clearly outlined

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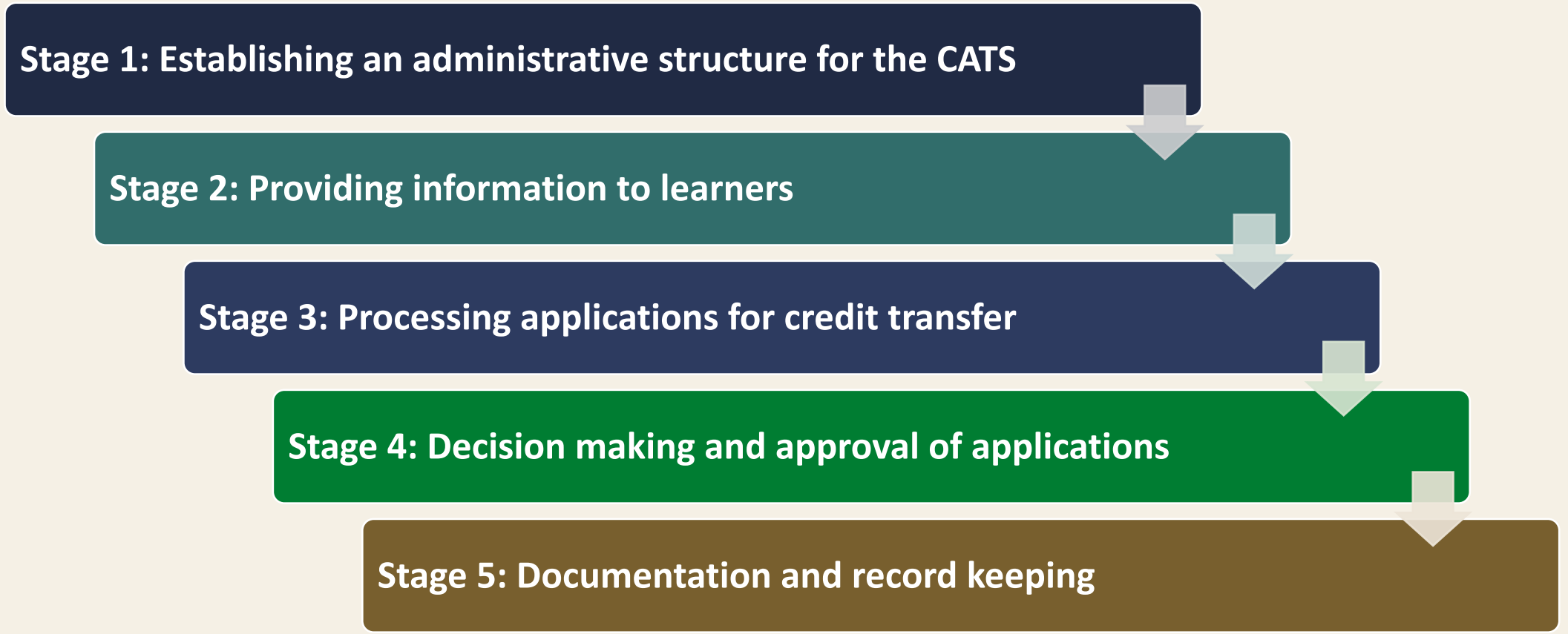
CATS implementation stages



Translation of study/ work hours into credits

System 1

1 credit = 10 hours

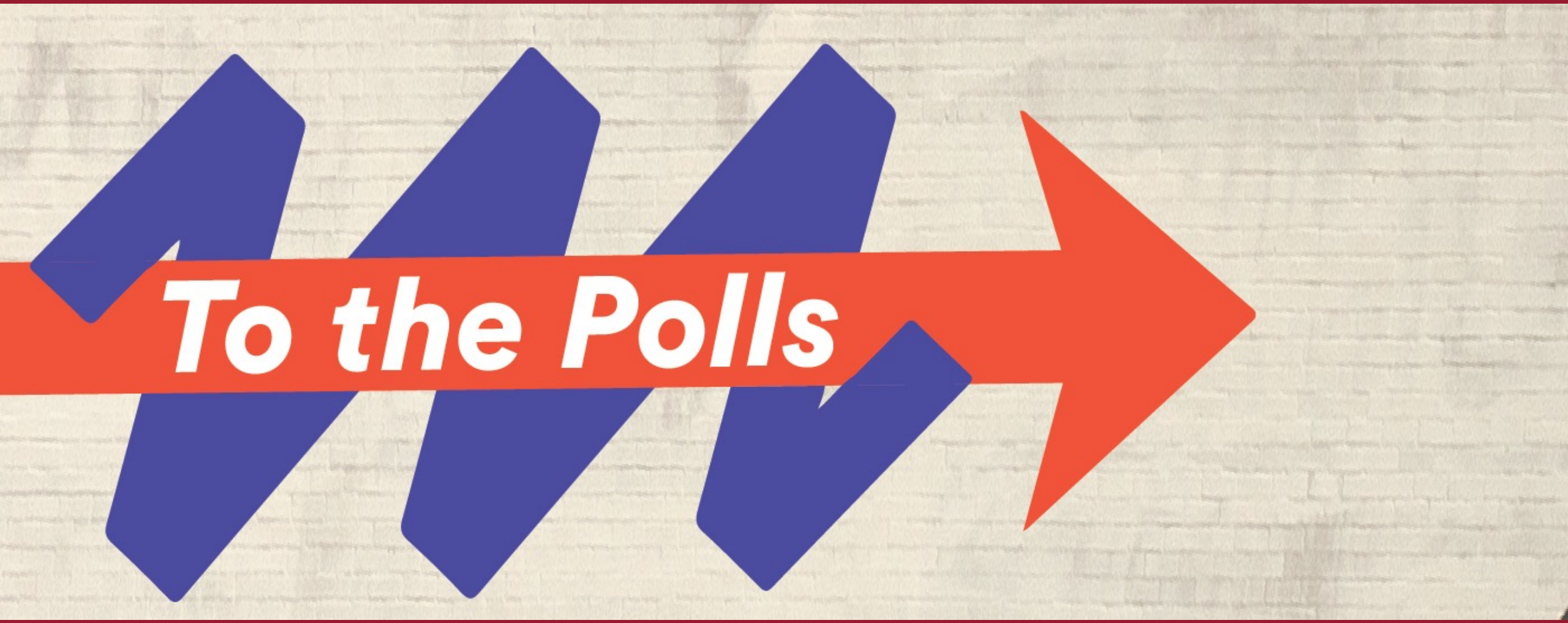
(e.g. Zambia, South Africa, Kenya)

System 2

1 credit = 25 – 30 hours (e.g. Tunisia, Uganda, Algeria)

Challenges to CATS Implementation

- Different education systems – e.g. Francophone vs British
- Lack of trust among education and training institutions
- Differences in content of learning programmes
- Absence of clear procedures


To the Polls

Poll 1:

What is the stage of CATS implementation in your country? (multiple choice question)

- Planning/ stakeholder consultations
- CAT System development
- Piloting
- Full implementation

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Poll 2:

What two major challenges/limitations has your country encountered in the implementation or in the efforts to implement CATS?

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