

Achieving Collaborative Regulation

Supporting Professionals Through Collaboration

All-Ireland Research into Social Workers' Professional Identity
NISCC, CORU, BASW NI and IASW

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Who We Are

Northern Ireland



The professional association for social work and social workers



Ag Rialáil Gairmithe Sláinte agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh
Regulating Health + Social Care Professionals

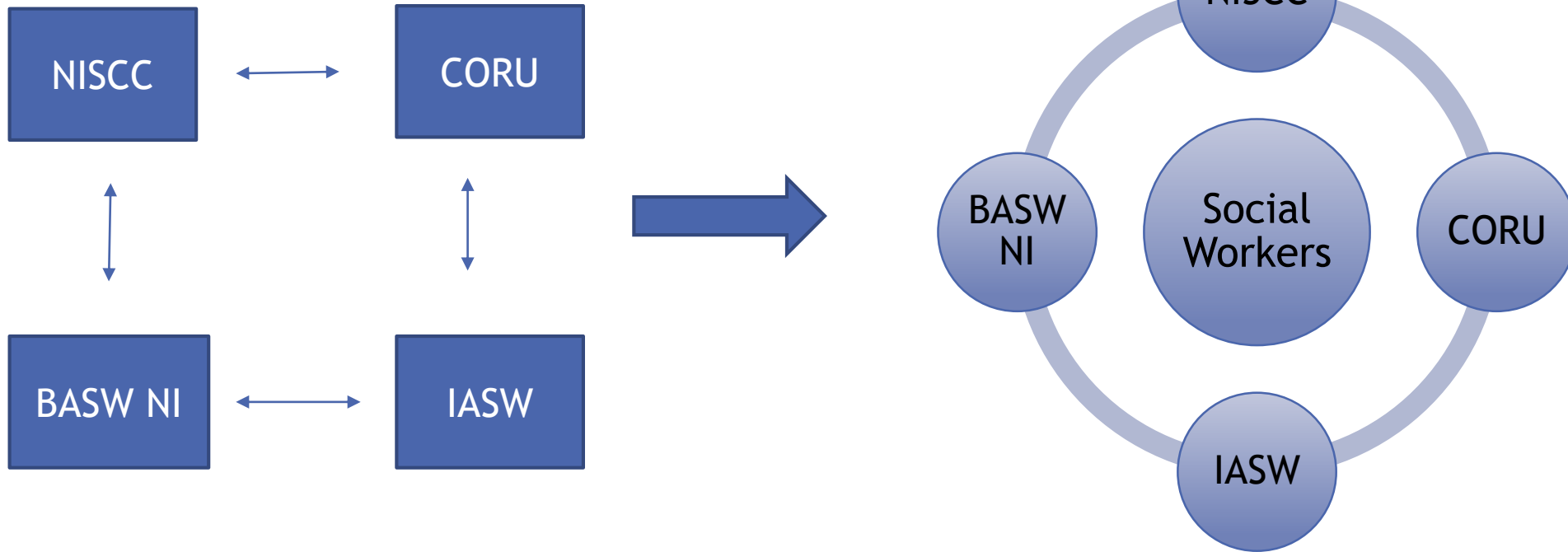


IASW

Irish Association of Social Workers
Cumann na hÉireann um Oibríthe Sóisialta



Context of our Relationships



Why Collaboration - *irons in the same fire?*

- ▶ Common ground - focus on social workers
- ▶ World Social Work Conference
 - Common issue - understanding professional identity
 - Challenge from profession - what does professionalism look like
- ▶ Support for social work profession
- ▶ Changing landscape - e.g. Brexit
- ▶ Collaboration pathways



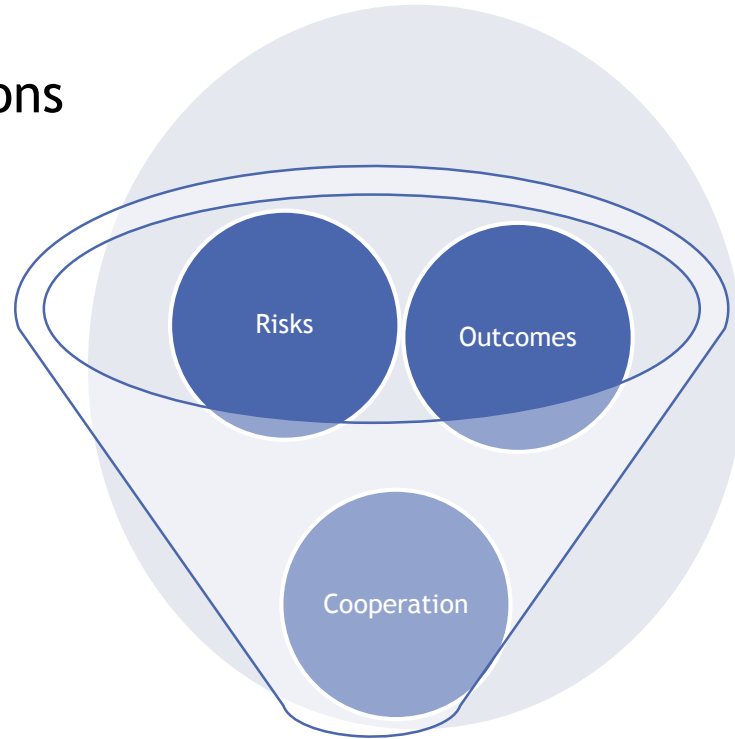
Challenges / Opportunities

- ▶ Different mandate of organisations
- ▶ Wanted to collaborate on a project to support the social work profession
- ▶ No set view of final outcome



The Process

- ✓ Competing goals
- ✓ Alignment of expectations
- ✓ Relational risk



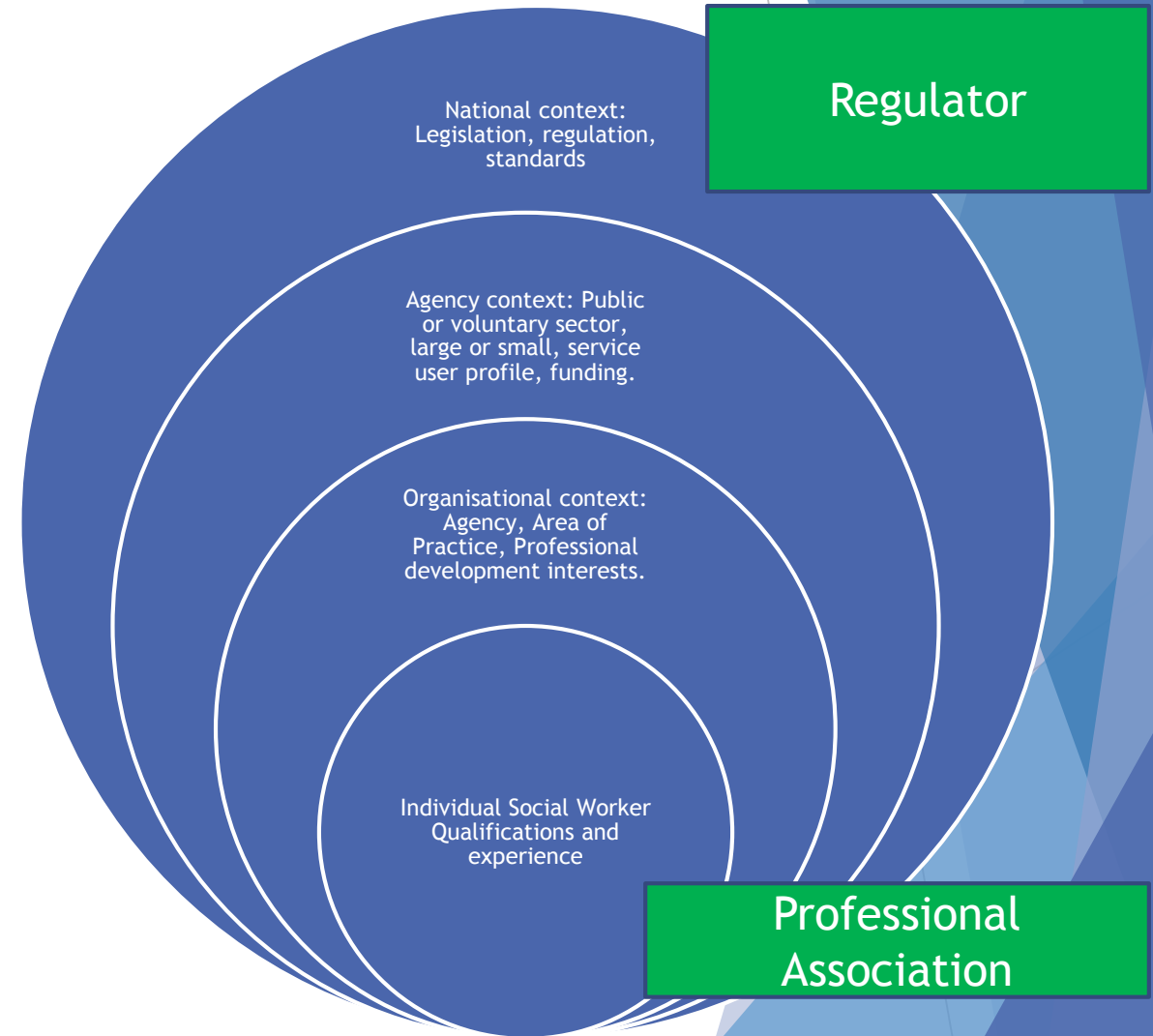
Collaboration

- ✓ Social workers
- ✓ Common goals
- ✓ Benefit of strategic alliances

How we Collaborated

KEY DRIVERS

- ▶ Commitment / leadership
- ▶ Organic process (ideas and follow through)
- ▶ Consultation with members/registrants
- ▶ Potential for collaboration outcome /impact
- ▶ Individual value collectively combined
- ▶ Funding - BASW International Development Fund
- ▶ Dedicated resources



The Project

Social Work Professional Identity

- ▶ Purpose of survey:

To explore the issues which contribute to social workers' sense of professional identity to inform work by the social work professional bodies and regulators in Northern Ireland (NI) and the Republic of Ireland (RoI) to strengthen the profession of social work.

- ▶ Respondents:

- ▶ 1,691 social workers from the NI and RoI responded to the on-line survey.
- ▶ 63% of regulated social workers from Northern Ireland
- ▶ 37% of regulated social workers from the Republic of Ireland

The Project

Social Work Professional Identity

Headline Outcomes:

- ▶ Significant correlation between social workers' views in NI and RoI
- ▶ Top 3 factors which contribute to a social worker's sense of their professional identity:
 - ▶ Empowering service users and working in partnership with them
 - ▶ Improving life opportunities for service users
 - ▶ Having a social work qualification
- ▶ Both in NI and RoI social workers' rated being a member of a regulated profession and being a member of a professional association much further down the range of responses.

The Project

Social Work Professional Identity

- ▶ Top 3 factors which negatively impact on a social worker's sense of their professional identity:
 - ▶ Bureaucracy
 - ▶ Workload pressure
 - ▶ Insufficient time to spend in direct engagement with service users
- ▶ Other factors negatively impacting on sense of professional identity included - working in multi-disciplinary teams and not having social worker in their job title.

Outcomes of Collaboration

- ▶ Improved understanding of what professionalism means to social workers
- ▶ Improved esteem for a profession that can feel under attack, under pressure, and under valued
- ▶ Better relationships between strategic partners
- ▶ Finding common ground to support the people on our membership lists and registers

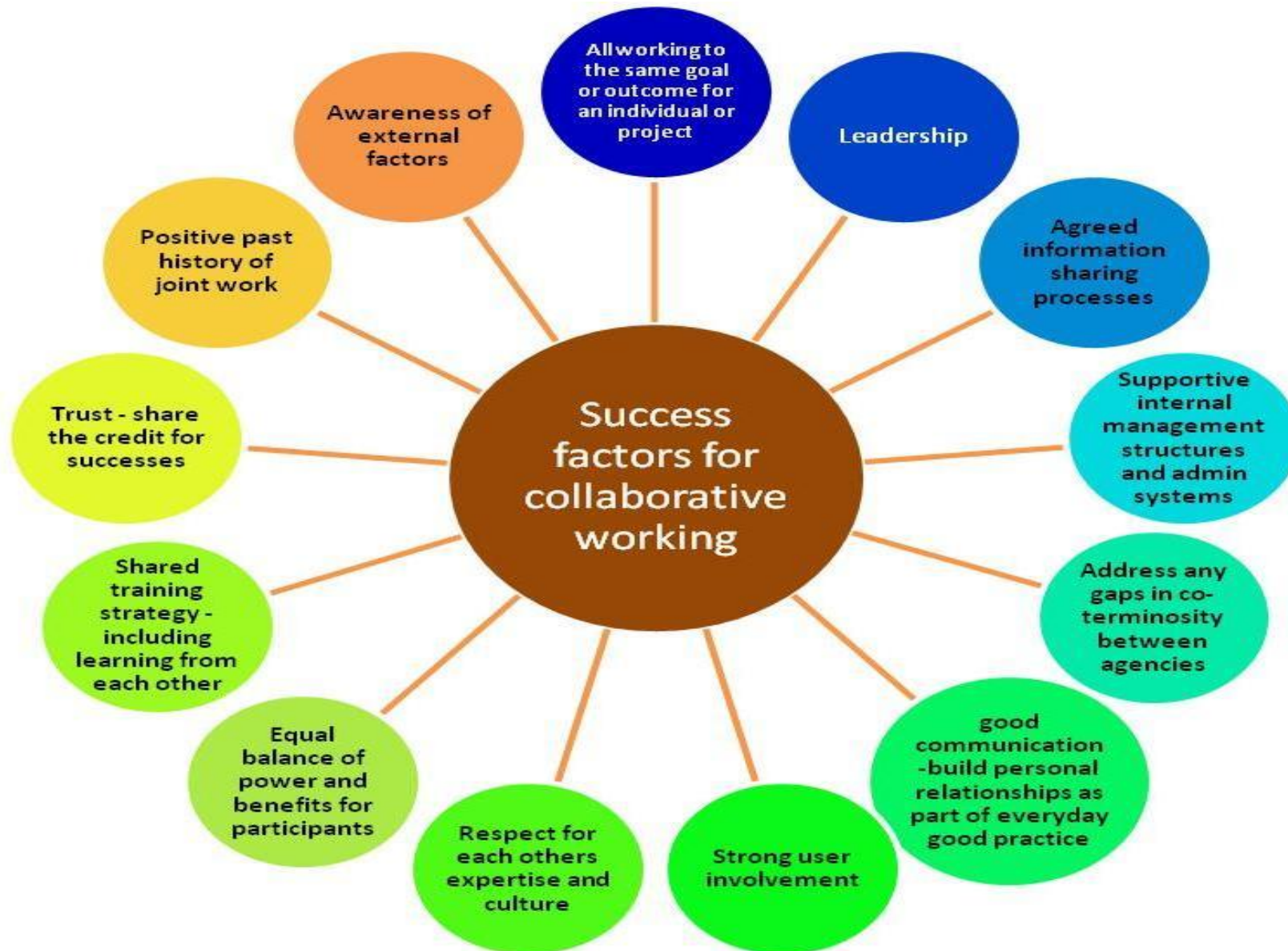


What Underpinned Our Successful Collaboration?

- ▶ Value
- ▶ Trust - positive history
- ▶ Interests in common
- ▶ Relationships
- ▶ Leadership
- ▶ Equal balance of power
- ▶ Funding



Factors for successful collaboration



Next Steps

- ▶ Analysis of data
- ▶ Share results with members of partners organisations (Conference?; websites; other)
- ▶ Dissemination of results to other interested parties (Government departments; social work educators; funders)
- ▶ Preparation of a 'product' for our members (leaflet; booklet; video)

Questions



Thank you

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