



## GAP CONCENTRATING ON END-USER FOCUS GROUPS

At the October Review the European Commission Project Officer and the Reviewers gave the Consortium some useful advice. One suggestion was to both expand the End-User Board, and together with the Expert Advisory Board, to get the members more involved.

The main activity in the GAP at this stage is Work Package 4 game design and Work Package 5, evaluation, which are running concurrently. We need End-Users' input at the key decision points to make sure the game feels like a real peacekeeping mission and at the same time meets the learning objectives of GAP – the attainment of

key soft skills, including gender awareness, cultural awareness, communication, cooperation and stress management.

The participants in the End-User focus groups see the value of these brainstorming sessions as well: "I consider focus groups as a very good tool for solving multifaceted problems. It allows us to take advantage of the diversity of participants' backgrounds: different cultural and legal systems, knowledge, experience and attitude - and all those diversities are focused in one common task. It is especially useful in situations where nothing is obvious." – says Walentyna Trzcńska, from the

Polish police. She adds: "After my first focus group I've also found out an interesting thing. We were evaluating solutions of interesting,



Dr. Walentyna Trzcńska,  
Police Academy in Szczytno,  
Poland

"movie", risky situations for the game and suddenly I've realized that most of those situations

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*"I consider focus groups as a very good tool for solving multifaceted problems..."*

## GAMING FOR PEACE



The GAP project offers an innovative training environment through the development of a Serious Game. This 21st century environment provides Conflict Prevention and Peace Building (CPPB) personnel experiences within scenarios through role-playing in their own organization and crucially by role-playing people from other organizations. In doing so, personnel increase their understanding, creativity and ability to communicate and collaborate with all participants in the field and within the networks of CPPB missions.



"Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding (CPPB) personnel can experience a range of scenarios through role-playing in their own organization."

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were caused by previous human error.”

The first important decision to make was the location of the game. We briefly considered Kosovo, as we have a lot of



*Denny Lane*

good material from there, but quickly decided against as it is unlikely there will be more peacekeeping missions in that area. The participants of the first Focus Group agreed with that and together we concluded that the area of Syria, Lebanon and Palestine is a place where peacekeeping and peace building will be

needed in the near future. The question was, should the game be set in a specific location or rather in a generic Middle-Eastern country?

After a discussion, the question was sent to the Experts, End-Users and Stakeholders and a good number of replies came back, every one of them saying that though there are good arguments for a specific location, a fictional Middle-Eastern country is the best way to go for training purposes.

Denny Lane, a former Municipal Administrator in the United Nations Mission and Kosovo and prior to that, a Colonel in the US military, explains how he sees the importance of GAP: “From that perspective, I think what GAP is trying to do is of the greatest importance as I doubt that potential civil administrators have the slightest idea vis-à-vis the scope of what they are going to be called upon to do. It would have been useful if, when I arrived in Pristina, there had

been a five-day orientation on what was expected. Indeed there were times when I found myself woefully ignorant.”

The value of the GAP game is that its scenarios are based on real-life situations derived from the conducted interviews. It must feel real for people going on missions; that is why it is crucial that we check every detail with the Experts and End-Users. The next Focus Group will be on the 2nd of March and we are going to circulate the draft game scripts before that, so everyone has a chance to read it and provide feedback.



*Justyna Pyz  
Project Manager  
Trinity College Dublin*

*“I think what GAP is trying to do is of the greatest importance...”*







## GAP PRESENTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL CONFERENCE ON TRUST

In late November 2017 Sara Singleton, GAP PhD researcher based at Trinity College Dublin, presented at the International Sociological Association conference on Trust in Tokyo, Japan hosted by Chou University. In attendance were over 200 researchers from across the social sciences, including economics, psychology and peace and conflict studies. She presented a paper co-authored with GAP Principal Investigator Dr. Anne Holohan titled: "Challenges and paradoxes in trust for military peacekeepers: A qualitative study with the Irish Defence Forces".

Trust underpins the key soft skills examined by GAP: Cooperation, Communication, Gender Awareness, Cultural Awareness and Stress Management.

The organizational structure of a peacekeeping mission is unique as formal hierarchies exist but must be able to operate in a networked organization where cooperation requires a high level of trust. The presentation discussed the importance of "trust awareness" as part of the peacekeeper skillset. It is crucial for peacekeepers to develop and maintain trusting relationships as well as knowing how and when to trust and when to exercise caution.

Attendants noted the unique nature of peacekeeping, where diverse organizations and individuals, who often have little or no prior experience working together, must come together rapidly and cooperate under high-risk conditions. Comment was also made on how the bounda-

ries are blurred between the professional and personal self, particularly for military peacekeepers living and working together, and how this affects usual strategies for developing trust in the workplace.

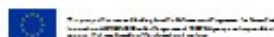
*Sara Singleton, PhD Researcher, Trinity College Dublin*



*"It is crucial for peacekeepers to develop and maintain trusting relationships..."*



### Challenges and paradoxes in trust for military peacekeepers: A qualitative study with the Irish Defense Forces



1/13/2018

Sara Singleton, PhD Candidate, Trinity College Dublin;  
Dr. Anne Holohan, Associate Professor, Trinity College Dublin

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## EVALUATING AND IMPROVING THE GAP GAME



*"GAP is planning a series of end-user evaluation sessions throughout the Spring..."*

Trinity College Dublin (TCD) continues working closely with Work Package 4 and Haunted Planet (HP) to provide end-user feedback on the continuous development of the GAP game. The initial game concept was evaluated in task T5.2 providing the basic grounding for the interaction style, narrative structure and learning approach. Task T5.3 is now current which involves working with evolving versions of the game, bringing them to end-users and using their feedback to improve it and ensure that it fulfils their needs and fits into their operational lives.

The figure illustrates the type of environment a user

(game player) may be presented with. He or she will be able to choose from a number of pathways involving decision making and then will be able to observe the reactions of the characters as the scene progresses.

National University of Ireland Maynooth in collaboration with TCD will be leading this evaluation task intended to support the further development process using a variety of methods including expert evaluation based on known interaction design principles as well as cooperative evaluation which involves observing the users playing the game at various levels of prototype development. Cooperative

evaluation is a way of working collaboratively with users to gather their impressions, feelings and suggestions based on actual gameplay experience. These data will be fed back into continuous improvement by HP in Work Package 4.

GAP is planning a series of end-user evaluation sessions throughout the Spring which will see the completion of the evaluation report, accompanying the hi-fidelity prototype of the game, in the early Summer.

*Michael Cook and Sarah Curristan, Trinity College Dublin*

## THE GAP GAME AS A VISUAL NOVEL

*"The GAP game is a visual novel; a game in which narrative is the main focus..."*

The GAP game is a visual novel; a game in which narrative is the main focus and in which the gameplay modes' main purpose is to let the player interact with the story. Most of a player's opportunities for interaction involve progressing the narrative in some way, either through choices made in dialogue or by interacting with objects in a scene that act as choice points within the game. A visual novel generally has multiple possible ways to progress through its storyline, and

these routes are determined by the choices a player makes. For this reason, visual novels often have multiple endings that reflect the choices made by the player.

In the game the player will play as and follow the lives of two different characters on deployment. Over multiple scenes, they will experience the characters' lives, where and how they work, who they work with, where they live, and what they do in their downtime. The choices the player makes as a character

will have consequences - both for that character and the world at large.

The primary platform will be iOS tablets (iPads) which as of 2017Q3 make up 25.8% of the global market share for tablets. Tablets have user interfaces that are highly suitable for visual novel games, and as such, player interaction with the game will require looking at the visuals, reading the descriptions and dialogue, listen-

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ing to the audio, and tapping and/or swiping on the screen. Tablet visuals and audio are of good quality, allowing fair sensory immersion in the game experience through realistic audio, assuming the player will be wearing headphones or earbuds.

Visually, the game will be composed of largely static 2D graphics, and will have a foreground and a background. The background will display the current scene or location, and may have three or more layers for parallax scrolling, if the scene can be scrolled. The foreground will contain character portraits superimposed over the background. These portraits

may change or animate to give characters alternate facial expressions. The foreground will also contain an area in which to display the game's narrative text - which will often take the form of a dialogue between two characters.

The GAP game has three gameplay modes. The "Inner Monologue" gameplay mode will expose the player to their character's internal thoughts and feelings, effectively allowing a type of "conversation" between the player and the character they control, allowing the player to build empathy with the character. The "Conversation" gameplay mode (shown) allows the

player to have conversations with other game characters, presenting simple as well as difficult choices to the player through dialogue, and serves as the core means through which the game's branching narrative will be navigated by the player. The "Scene Exploration" gameplay mode is intended to give the player a good impression of what a scene (e.g., a market place) looks like and let them explore it to learn information of cultural as well as direct practical relevance.

*Mads Haahr and Róisín Cotton, Haunted Planets Studio*

*"Visually, the game will be composed of largely static 2D graphics ..."*

## WELCOME TO MASHRIQA



The GAP game is planned to set in a fictional Middle Eastern country, Mashriqa. A country of fertile plains, high mountains, and deserts, Mashriqa is a moderately conservative, predominantly Muslim country (80%), with smaller Christian (15%), and Druze (5%) populations.

With a large population of ethnic Arabs, there is also a strong Kurdish presence in the north, smaller groups descended from Greek settlers in the west, and enclaves of Turkish immigrants in some of the larger cities. There are refugee camps throughout the country trying to cope with huge num-

bers of refugees from a war-torn neighbouring country.

Although records of settlement in the area date back to biblical times, the state first came to prominence in the aftermath of the crusades, when European crusader states broke up the existing Caliphate. This allowed independent tribes in the area to assert their own kingdom, which lasted for several centuries before being absorbed into the Ottoman Empire in 1489.

The country was administered by France after World War 1, which left a linguistic and cultural mark, with French names remaining popular today. On achieving

*"Mashriqa is a moderately conservative, predominantly Muslim country ..."*

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independence, Mashriqa suffered periods of major unrest, including a civil war in the 80s between Islamic hardliners and a secular faction supported by their northern neighbours. Although there have been local power-sharing agreements in place for some years, many of these old rivalries have not fully healed.

In 2004, tensions between hardline Islamists and local authorities escalated to violence, which saw hardline paramilitary forces crossing the border from their Southern neighbours to join the fighting. A ceasefire was eventually broached, and UN Peacekeeping forces were invited in, first to maintain order between the moderate and hardline factions, and later to help promote stability through capacity building and infrastructure projects.

It is in this environment that our characters – and player – will operate. The game features two playable characters. A play-through of the game will require the player first to play as one and then as the other character.

The first playable character is Maria, a Finnish CIMIC Officer in her mid 20s. Maria deferred her military service in order to finish her education. She now has a Masters in Communications, which she hopes to convert to a career in PR once she returns home. She's a first lieutenant, and is serving as a CIMIC officer on a large UN base while deployed to Mashriqa. Her immediate family comprises two parents and an older sister, Sophia, who works as a fundraiser for a disaster-relief charity.

The second playable character is Adam, a Portugese Police Officer in his late 30s. Adam worked in

his home country and developed skills in negotiation/de-escalation. He plans to eventually move from police work to teaching, and volunteered for this deployment to try and broaden his skill set. As an international police officer in Mashriqa he works with the local forces in capacity building and helping to enforce security. Adam isn't married, but has a partner at home, Carolina. They have a 3 year old boy, Manuel, and a 6 month old baby girl, Ines.

*Note that this is work in progress, and the final game may depart somewhat from what we describe here.*

*Mads Haahr and Róisín Cotton, Haunted Planets Studios*

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GAP Gaming for Peace

## GAP Consortium

