APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH TEAM AND ARTICLES FROM THE RESEARCHERS

'SOFT SKILLS FOR PEACEKEEPING AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT EXPERTS'
Gaming for Peace Project

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Introduction: Gaming for Peace (GAP) Project

Gaming for Peace (GAP) was launched in September 2016. GAP is an EU H2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation project. The main goal of the project is to develop a curriculum in relevant 'soft skills' (cooperation, communication, gender and cultural awareness) for personnel from diverse organisations working in the field of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations. This curriculum will be embedded in a serious online role-playing game, renewed and updated by returning personnel playing the game. GAP fills a gap in training and offers an efficient and inexpensive way of delivering universal and standardized training in these skills.

The requirements to effectively operate and partake in conflict and post-conflict situations for preventive measures and peacebuilding, demands the best expertise and individual skills in adapting to fraught and complex environments. Although the personnel involved in conflict prevention and peace building (CPPB) generally have 'traditional based skills', (e.g. intelligence, investigation, weapons handling etc.), soft skills such as communication, cooperation, negotiation, mediation, gender and cultural awareness are less well emphasised. The GAP project proposes to fill this recognised training gap in peacekeeping; embedding a base curriculum of soft skills that facilitates coordination and relationship building in an environment of organisational, gender and cultural diversity. The ability to foresee and surmount social, cultural, or historical barriers necessitates the most up-to date training for peacekeeping. Gaming for Peace represents an innovative technique for the training of personnel involved in peace operations and requires further expert input as the project continues.

The CPPB training landscape

Twenty-first century peacekeeping has evolved into a multifaceted and complex process. Immersion into the CPPB world requires in-depth knowledge of the practices of peacekeeping in diverse contexts and on a variety of distinct levels. The first phase of research in the GAP project therefore focused on assessing the often-complicated nature of current training methods in CPPB and determining areas for improvement. [The full report will be available publicly on the project website (www.gap-project.eu) December 2017.] It incorporates an evaluation of CPPB in terms of EU development, concepts and training approaches in a European context; the UN approach to crisis management and peacekeeping; worldwide approaches to training, looking at the OSCE (Organisation of Security Cooperation in Europe), the African Union (AU), ASEAN (Association of South Eastern Asian Nations) and other trends in CPPB training.

With the growth of peacekeeping, there has also been growth in international organisations and joint UN missions, especially between the UN, EU and AU. In the evaluation of CPPB training approaches, there are many similar approaches to training from these organisations, but there are also significant differences in training assessments and requirements and from classroom-based teaching and seminars to simulations, role playing, online learning and e-learning. There have been various attempts at the standardisation of approaches but with limited success. In addition, there can be many phases to peacekeeping training. While there is a level of interconnectivity between the UN and other international organisations, in particular the EU in terms of CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy) missions, the lack of coordination and standardisation in pre-deployment training has limited the potential impact of practical cooperation in the field. These problems result chiefly from differences in the organisational culture, practice and procedures of the EU and UN at both policy and operational level.[1] Recognising these deficiencies, the recent document on strengthening the UN-EU strategic partnership on peacekeeping and crisis management facilitated the linking of the EU 'Goalkeeper' and 'Schoolmaster' platform to recruitment and training of civilian personnel in addition to uploading information on UN training opportunities. The statement also calls for a move toward a tri-lateral training partnership with the AU in terms of supporting indigenous training and capacity building, including police and civilian components.[2]

Given that there are around 300 centres, colleges, institutions and academies worldwide providing training for personnel involved in peace operations or crisis management operations (over 100 of these training providers are in Europe alone), finding common ground between these facilities is a daunting task. Naturally, with different rules of engagement and different training backgrounds, involvement in peacekeeping operations requires a whole range of skills and effective training needs to incorporate specialised skills, including soft skills. Most approaches in the EU, U.S. or Asian training centres do account for courses on gender and culture, for instance, but this is not consistently applied and in-depth knowledge of these subjects is both undersupplied and inadequate.

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1 European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), EU-UN Cooperation in Peacekeeping and Crisis Management Briefing (2015):9

2 EEAS, (European External Action Service). *Strengthening the UN-EU Strategic Partnership on Peacekeeping and Crisis Management: Priorities 2015-2018* (2015): 5

The Evolution of E-Learning and Online Training

As online training has gained momentum in recent years and is less classroom-based, several core topics in the training of personnel for peacekeeping have yet to be developed. More needs to be done in terms of reform to training procedures at all levels and developing a coherent curriculum for online learning. The evolution in the field of distance education and distributed learning increased rapidly after the development of Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL)[3]. Online learning includes sets of learning applications, web resources, web-based applications and new collaboration technologies. Moreover, new hybrid approaches regarding online learning activities are increasing. Ideally, the online learning components are combined or blended with face-to-face instruction to provide more learning outcomes.[4] Even with the opportunities that technology can provide, researchers have seen the implementation of a technology-supported collaborative learning environment as a challenge.[5]

The Soft Skills Approach in CPPB

While soft skills in particular, are not easily discernible in peace operations, there are certain models and assessments of soft skills available that can be ascertained for the GAP project. For instance, the cornerstone to peacebuilding is building relationships and the element of trust is clearly important in that endeavour. Trust, like empathy, communication and negotiation can be considered a soft skill. In training for missions, organisations need to give soft skills prominence. This includes areas such as negotiation techniques, mediation and stress management, particularly to improve the chances of success in any mission. Soft skills, can be interpreted and adapted for scenarios that will fit into the design of game. What is certain, is that the concept of soft skills is a recent phenomenon and not universally well-known; attempts to define the concept have encompassed such phrases as "emotional intelligence," "individual skills", "emotional competencies", "soft aptitudes" and the "soft side of work." There is no consensus on, or a universally accepted, list of soft skills. While there is a need for greater demarcation, within this constraint Matteson et al have provided the following examples;[6]

• Sociability; • Self-management; • Communication skills; • Ethics; • Diversity sensitivity; • Teamwork skills;	• Problem-solving or critical thinking abilities; • Customer service competencies; • Emotional intelligence; • Leadership skills.

3 Charalambos, V., Michalinos, Z. Chamberlain, R. 2004. The Design of Online Learning Communities: Critical Issues. Educational Media International. ISSN 1469-5790 online © 2004 International Council for Educational Media.

4 Means, et al. 2009. Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies. Available at: www.ed.gov/about/officewww.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opepd/ppss/reports.html

5 Zhang, D., Zhao, J. L., Zhou, L., & Nunamaker Jr., J. F. 2004. Can e-learning replace classroom learning? Communications of the ACM , 45 (5), 75-79.

6. See Matteson, M. L., Anderson, Lorien & Boyden, Cynthia. 2015. 'Soft Skills': A Phrase in Search of Meaning'. *Portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 16 (1), pp. 71-88.

7 Trevithick, P. 2005. Social work skills: A practice handbook (2nd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press. p.81

Soft skills are the personal attributes that allow one person to successfully relate to another. In terms of empathy, Trevithick states that 'empathy involves trying to understand, as carefully and sensitively as possible the nature of another person's experience, their own unique point of view and what meaning this conveys for that individual.'[7] It is a key inter-personnel skill, a vital component of emotional intelligence and an important soft skill. It aids our ability to understand others by being able to put ourselves in their shoes but also supports and fosters a sense of teamwork and shared goals. For emotional intelligence, Salvoey and Mayer first explained emotional intelligence as a form of social intelligence which involves a person's ability to monitor not only their own but others' emotions, to distinguish among them and to use that information to inform responses and actions.[8] The 2014 Hanover Research examined best practice in measuring soft skills, such as teamwork, creativity, and character, with a focus on soft skill assessment embedded into the core academic curriculum being key.

Serious Games and CPPB

As a result of the popularity of gaming, professional trainers, educators and managers have sought to utilise the prevalence of gaming by bringing gaming into the training room and classrooms. Serious games (SR) are games for learning, educating, and developing new skills. It is argued that digital games, including simulations and virtual worlds, have the potential to be an important teaching tool because they are interactive, engaging and immersive activities.[9] The applicability of gaming for soft skills training is gaining ground especially given the capacity of gaming to support reflective learning, self-efficacy and reflection on performance. Yet these critical elements require central components of the game design to feature learning outcomes that are recognizable and measurable as well as feedback on performance and opportunities for reflection. Substantive literature, research and scholarship have pointed overwhelmingly in favour of gaming as an educational tool.[10] However, several studies have pointed to a dearth of evidence regarding the design and delivery of gaming as a method for training in soft skills.

Gaming can be distinguished from traditional learning because games by their nature are designed to measure progress since learning is happening and is captured in the gaming experience itself.[11] An important aspect of any education tool is the ability evaluate outcomes and obtain feedback, to self-reflect and build on the feedback. Gaming is particularly well suited to such self-reflection and critical learning. Within this mechanism, learning soft skills avoids a linear approach and extends into a more complex lesson learning process. A key study carried out as part of the GaLA: The European Network of Excellence on Serious Gaming (FP7: ICT) demonstrated a number of structural, organizational and individual barriers to utilizing gaming for soft skills training. The report highlights some of the pro-

8 Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. 1990. Emotional intelligence *Imagination, Cognition and Personality,* Baywood Publishing Company., Inc. 9, pp.185–211.

9 Ulicsak, M. & Wright, M. 2010. 'Games in Education. Serious Games. A FutureLab Literature Review. See also Gee, J.P., 2005. 'What would a state of the art instructional video game look like?' *Journal of online education.* Smith, R, 2007. 'Game impact theory: The five forces that are driving the adoption of game technologies within multiple established industries. *Games and Society Yearbook.*

10 Pivec, M, and Dziabenko, O. 2004. Game-Based Learning in Universities and Lifelong Learning: "UniGame: Social Skills and Knowledge Training" Game Concept, Journal of Universal Computer Science, (1) 14-26

11 See GLASSlab. 2012. 'Groundbreaking Video Game Design Lab will Research and Develop Video Games to Engage Students and Measure Learning.' Computer Weekly News 12 July 2012: 985

grammes which may be helpful in arena of soft skills: Minecraft: Education Edition, Use Your Brainz Edu, Gamelearn and Merchants all of which encompass a variety of game learning techniques. A further well-known example is Food Force, the first serious game developed by the United Nations. By focusing on the potential of gaming to contribute to the key soft skills debates, GAP research has revealed that the utilisation of this methodology offers up new horizons in terms of equity of access and supporting learning through experience. Serious gaming is a developing area with significant research starting to emerge that helps to underpin the need for strong pedagogical frameworks in terms of learning outcomes, feedback and reflective learning. This aspect does not detract from the gaming element but serves as an important reminder that learning methods remain paramount. Existing approaches to soft skills training are embedded in pedagogical design, delivery and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of that training.

Stakeholders have a key role in planning and designing soft skills curricula and game development

The selected key stakeholders and initially identified end users are playing a crucial role in the development of curricula and GAP game focusing on soft skills. Almost 200 interviews of peacekeeping experts (military, police, civilians) have been conducted thus far in the project from several EU countries. The interviewees were selected based on their individual experience during peacekeeping missions and operations, with a special emphasis on soft skills (communication, interaction, trust building, risk and stress management, gender and sexuality) and training needs. All the interviews have been analysed using qualitative methods with the GAP methodology set by Trinity College Dublin and all academic partners. Beyond the interviews, end user stakeholder panels will be facilitated in Finland, Poland, Portugal, Ireland and UK. Based on the analysed research data, scenarios focusing on skills, competences and behaviours will be developed by the GAP consortium and stakeholders throughout 2017. As an example, based on the research conducted in GAP, communication has been identified as essential in peacekeeping missions by military experts. At the meta-level, communication is identified in multiple ways, such as via language, or the use of an interpreter, in meetings, by using various communication channels, facilitating official and unofficial discussions, as well as physical presence in the field. The ability to communicate effectively can make a difference in avoiding future conflicts and risks. In a peacekeeping operation, an expert may communicate with multiple organisations, civil servants, local authorities and the local population.[12]

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12 GAP Stakeholder Consultation Report, 2017 (not published). The consortium working on this GAP project includes Trinity College Dublin, Laurea University of Applied Sciences, Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention Maynooth University, EnquiryA, Haunted Planet Studios, Upskill Enterprise, Ulster University, Future Analytics Consulting, and end-users including Fincent, Ministry of Interior Portugal, Police Service Northern Ireland, Bulgarian Defence Institute, National Defence University Poland, Irish Defence Forces and the Police Academy Poland.

Conclusion

Given that peacekeeping has grown into a multidimensional phenomenon, enhancing the training of peacekeepers in soft skills is paramount. Capability gaps in peacekeeping operations have been a feature of modern peacekeeping missions. However, operating effectively in UN and EU missions requires the best expertise and skills available and organisations involved in crisis management need to have the right mix of capabilities in terms of personnel, operations and equipment. Just as the EU is taking steps to strengthen its training initiatives, the UN is also bringing preventive diplomacy to the fore. Implementing training reforms to advance the effectiveness of training must be a priority. Moreover, the development of GAP can go a significant way to improving and advancing current training approaches in the field of CPPB. Visit www.gap-project.eu for more information on developments in GAP and information about our upcoming conference and other consultative activities.

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