International Academy of Business
One step forward in building society in peace: Success story from Kazakhstan

Introduction
The International Academy of Business (IAB) is one of the leading educational institutions in Kazakhstan with rich experience and strong academic traditions. Founded in 1988, IAB has been providing business education for 25 years and building on its dedication to responsible leadership and entrepreneurship. The mission of the Academy is to prepare a new generation of socially responsible business leaders of Central Asia, drawing on international integration, interaction with business, and the energy of a creative and enterprising team of professionals.

One of the key activities of IAB is the development of partnership and dialogue with the public national companies and the civil society. The Academy is actively involved in the systematic improvement of economic and social policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, working with civil society and non-governmental organisations of Kazakhstan, and developing strategic partnerships with social entrepreneurs, national companies, businesses, etc.

The importance and necessity of socially important initiatives are reflected in all policy documents of the Academy, and for many years IAB has been implementing a number of projects in this area:

- The programme "Universities of the country in support of rural schools"
- Vocational guidance and educational activities in the regions and rural areas
- Allocation of special grants for orphans, persons with disabilities, children from low-income families, for gifted children
- Free education, consultation, expert support for beginning a small business
- Adapting and developing materials on the institutional development of NGOs, as well as distributing them through training and the creation of the resource website

Challenges
Young people need skills that contribute to the acquisition of skills of comfortable existence in society and the development of personal leadership qualities. Young leaders who have mastered the skills of mediation learn to control their emotions in relation to the behaviour of other people and have coped with the desire to judge. The key is to look at the conflict, as a task that must be addressed, first to determine the cause of the conflict, and then to apply a mediative approach as an alternative method of dispute resolution. The mediator uses specialised skills (reflective listening, impartiality, managing negotiations, development of possible options, etc.) to resolve the dispute, leading to a win-win scenario. With these skills, students will be able to develop a strategy for conflict management, identifying preventive measures for the anticipation, management and resolution of conflicts arising in the public and private life.
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Actions taken

In September 2010, a laboratory "Mediation and Conflict Resolution" was established. In October 2012, a Centre for Mediation and Conflict Resolution (hereinafter, the Centre) was established, with main activities including:

- Research – writing and publishing articles, manuals, and guidelines on mediation and conflict resolution
- Practice – mediation and conflict management services, with the application of knowledge, skills, and conflict resolution
- Teaching a course of mediation and conflict resolution and training practicing mediators

To promote the idea of mediation and development of mediative competence of students at IAB, the Centre hosts Open Door days for all students called “Nosce te ipsum” (“Know thyself”). During our graduate classes and workshops, students master the theoretical framework and acquire some competence in the use of mediation. A theoretical component of the training programme is implemented by the means of the "Conflict" course lectures, and the practical component is implemented through different types of practices, classes, and trainings. Also, students pass psycho-correction tests of personality traits and receive one-on-one advice from a mediator.

Special attention is paid to the teaching tolerance of young people. New research priorities in the field of conflict resolution and mediation are highlighted, which are aimed at designing and developing the mediative competence of youth in contemporary Kazakhstan society.

Activities and events that take place under the guidance of Centre’s mediators are aimed at teaching students mediative communication skills and methods of its application in practice.

In March 2011, a meeting was organised at IAB for Kazakhstan mediation centre managers with a representative of UNDP. The purpose of the meeting was to learn about the activities of mediation centres and the possibility of further cooperation in the field of mediation development in Kazakhstan. They proposed to develop a common vision to create a market of mediation in Kazakhstan.

Results

Today, collaboration between IAB’s Centre for Mediation and Conflict Resolution and UNDP is becoming closer and more fruitful. During the workshop, "The introduction of mediation in Kazakhstan," organised by UNDP and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Shymkent, Atyrau, and Almaty cities, the Centre held special trainings for judges, law enforcement officers, and city mayors on the use of mediation in accordance with the Law on Mediation.

UNDP in Kazakhstan and the Supreme Court also jointly launched a pilot project, "Judicial Mediation – a necessary condition for the development of mediation in Kazakhstan." This project aims at the development of mediation by introducing the mechanism of judicial mediation in the courts of the Auezov district of Almaty. In addition, the project includes an information campaign aimed at raising
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awareness among the population, including young people, about the possibilities of mediation and advocacy of peaceful dispute resolution processes.

Further, the creation of a centre for mediation on the basis of higher education institutions is planned. The positive experience of the project will be submitted to the Supreme Court and the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan for replication in other jurisdictions and regions. Lectures for third and fourth year students at IAB are also provided in the framework of the given project.

Additionally, the experts of the Centre conduct lectures and training on the course "Mediative competence and prevention of conflicts" in the Almaty regional centre of training for the Higher Party School of PDP "Nur Otan" on a regular basis throughout the year. The courses are held every month, with the participation of young leaders of party cells (about 300 people). To support this training, the Centre collaborates with the Corporate Fund, "Centre of social partnership," under the National Welfare Fund "Samruk-Kazyna."

IAB is ready to provide a platform for all activities that promote mediation, and the Centre for Mediation and Conflict Resolution will be happy to contribute to the organisation and conduction of special events.

The role of PRME/sustainability principles

This case story along with other reports demonstrate our commitment to carrying out the Six Principles of PRME, as proponents of ethical behaviour, financial responsibility, and corporate social responsibility in our teaching, research, learning, and community partnerships.