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“Akelius” hits the target

The UNICEF regional adviser highly appreciated the implementation of the Akelius project in Kazakhstan, aimed at improving the language skills of children.

In June 2024, Ms. Maida Pašić, UNICEF Regional Education Advisor for Europe and Central Asia, visited Kazakhstan. The purpose of the mission was to familiarize with the educational conditions in the country and the priorities of the education sector, discuss and support the cooperation program between UNICEF and the government of Kazakhstan to ensure equal access of children to quality education in the light of best international practices and approaches.

During the visit, Maida Pašić got acquainted with the implementation of the Akelius project (“Improving the language skills of children in Kazakhstan to improve academic performance”) in Astana, which the Kazakhstan International Bureau for Rights person is implemented with the support of the State Public Enterprise “Methodological Center” of the capital’s akimat and the Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in Kazakhstan.

Maida Pašić highly appreciated the work of the team in implementing the Akelius program in Astana and wished good luck in the further implementation of the project.

The Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights has been implementing the Akelius project in Astana since 2021.

The innovative Akelius language initiative helps teachers improve children's literacy through app-based and tablet-based activities. Since its launch, the Akelius application has developed and tested competency levels A0-B1 (the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages defines language knowledge and skills at six levels - A1 (elementary proficiency), A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 (proficiency). perfectly). Based on the positive results of Phase 1 of the Akelius initiative and the opinions of educators and specialists in Astana, it became possible to expand the program to more schools, as well as expand the program itself to include English in schools.

The second phase of the project is currently being implemented. The components of Phase 2 of the Akelius Initiative (October 2023 – May 2025) are presented as follows. Taking into account the experience of implementing the initiative in 2021-2023, during the implementation of Phase 2, teaching of the Russian language using the Akelius application continued. In Phase 2, an English language component was included in all 6 schools participating in the project and using the Akelius application for the Russian language. English is a compulsory subject in all schools in Kazakhstan (in accordance with the National Trilingual Policy). The project is designed to help English teachers, after initial training, introduce the Akelius application into their regular work. In addition to Kazakh or mixed schools, the English course on the Akelius app is also offered for use in language high schools. The English course in the Akelius app is especially attractive to teachers due to the high interest of children and young people in information technology.

Thus, the Akelius program is currently used in six schools in Astana. In each school, one Russian teacher and one English teacher (and in some schools, several teachers of English and Russian), use the Akelius program and tablets to teach children with the support of the project's leading master teachers and KIBC staff.

Particular attention is paid to training teachers and conducting master classes.

Thus, from March to June, master classes were held in the following schools:

- April 12, 2024 – "Use of the Akelius educational platform in Russian language lessons" within the framework of the republican seminar "Use of modern educational platforms as a means of increasing the effectiveness of teaching in Russian language and literature lessons" (based on the 60th school-lyceum);
- April 23 – master class on using the "Akelius" program (based on the 5th gymnasium);
- May 3 – master class as part of the seminar "Using the Akelius platform to fill gaps in children's knowledge when learning Russian and English languages" (on the basis of the 62nd gymnasium);
- May 22 – master class for teachers on using the "Akelius" program (based on the 75th gymnasium).

As of the end of May 2024, at least 271 children participate in the program, who use the Akelius program both as part of regular lessons and as part of additional lessons if the child has special educational needs.