

IOM, Kiheitai hand in hand to support Young Entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone

The International Organization for Migration has partnered with Kiheitai to support young entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone.



Japan, Tokyo, Mar 23, 2021 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - The two organizations have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to start an initiative to raise funds through Airfunding a global crowdfunding platform that will support the start-ups of Sierra Leonean youths that are undergoing the IOM's business training and mentorship program. Air funding was launched in 2018 by Kiheitai as a cross-border donation-based crowdfunding service that provides support across borders and cultures to individuals and organizations in emerging countries where it is difficult to lead a minimum standard of living. To date, approximately \$200 million in support has been generated on Airfunding through more than 200,000 projects in over 200 countries.

This partnership is within the framework of the IOM project titled: "Reducing the Risk of Irregular Migration through Employment Promotion and Entrepreneurship for the Youths" funded by the Government of Japan.

The aim of the partnership is to increase job creation through business and entrepreneurship in a bid to dissuade Young Sierra Leoneans from embarking on irregular migration. Every year, thousands of young Sierra Leoneans go on desperate journeys to Europe and the Middle East through illegal means. During their travels, they are subjected to forced labor or sexual exploitation. IOM Sierra Leone is addressing this problem through awareness-raising and youth empowerment schemes including entrepreneurship.

“We are delighted to partner with Kiheитай in supporting this exciting initiative to empower young people. Through our entrepreneurship program, last year, we conducted training with ILO for 240 young entrepreneurs who are still being mentored on business management. Therefore, our partnership with Kiheитай is welcome and timely, because these young entrepreneurs, needs support now, more than ever to boost their startups or scaling up their existing businesses where they can get their livelihoods” - **Akao Kunikazu, Project Manager at IOM Sierra Leone.**

"We are very pleased to collaborate with IOM as part of Airfunding's activity to support entrepreneurs from Sierra Leone and further enhance our system to support their challenges. We are very excited about the new possibilities for Sierra Leone that will emerge from the enthusiasm generated by this program." - **Ryosuke Abe, CEO of Kiheитай**

Through this partnership, Young entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to receive online user training on crowdfunding procedures and techniques. They will also be guided and trained on how to develop and showcase and promote their business plans on the crowdfunding platform.

“Airfunding will provide advisors to help them gather support for their projects from all over the world and will work with them on a tripod basis. In addition, a new overseas NGO program will be launched in April as a measure to gather support not only from overseas but also from Japan. Both parties will work together to ensure that these programs will have a positive outcome for Sierra Leone.”- **Lourdes Sanchez Voigt, Vice president of customer support-Air funding.**

About IOM

IOM is the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration. IOM works to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration challenges, and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees, internally displaced people, and affected communities. <https://www.iom.int> (IOM Global web page).

About Kiheитай

Kiheитай is a global company that uses web services to eliminate boundaries around the world and make the impossible possible. With groundbreaking services such as "Airfunding," a donation-based crowdfunding service that enables people to change their lives for the better with a small amount of

money, and "Airtripp," a global community service used by 10 million people in 200 countries around the world, Kiheитай is expanding people's possibilities beyond borders, culture, language, and distance. Airtripp is a global community service used by 10 million people in 200 countries. With members in 11 countries around the world, Kiheитай is committed to making the world we live in a better place. For more information about our company, please visit <https://kiheитай.co.jp>.

Contact

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