

Standard Chartered Bank organises a Walk for Autism

- **Over 100 participants**
- **One in Eighty-eight children is diagnosed with autism**
- **Bank employees entitled to three volunteering days per year**

Bahrain, 12 May 2013 - Standard Chartered Bank organized the Standard Chartered Walk for Autism that took place on 7 May, at the Lagoon, in Amwaj Islands.

The main objective of the Walk was to raise awareness of Autism and the inclusion of autistic individuals into the normal daily lives of people as well as raise funds. All money raised by the walk will be donated to Alia Centre for Autism to fund training programs, trainers as well as necessary equipment required for the centre itself.

Over 100 participants took part in the 1km symbolic walk around the Lagoon, where Standard Chartered Bank employees comprised the majority joined by children from the Alia Centre for Early Intervention, their families and friends.

Commenting on the initiative, Hassan A Jarrar, CEO of Standard Chartered Bank - Bahrain said,

"This walk is one of the numerous ways demonstrating our commitment to the community especially within the Bank itself. Standard Chartered promotes diversity and inclusion as part of its pillars where we believe individuals with special needs can be integrated within our communities provided they have access to the appropriate training and education. Alia for Early Intervention works hard to provide the best environment for autistic children within the Kingdom and we are very happy to assist them achieve their mission in raising awareness of autism."

Sahar Juma, Board Member of Bahrain Society for Children with Behavioral & Communication Difficulties:

"We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to Standard Chartered Bank for organising this walk to help children with Autism be heard. Our focus at Alia for Early Intervention is to provide the means for children to be educated and trained so they can be integrated into society where they can be productive citizens. People are now more aware of Autism than 10 years ago, and statistics in the US show that it's on the rise, 1 in 88 people are diagnosed with the condition. But we still have a long way to go in terms of educating the masses about what Autism is and what individuals with Autism require in terms of training, environment and support. Our challenge is to provide the best possible training to as many Autistic individuals as possible within Bahrain and overcoming limitations in resources whether human (trainers) or financial. Building awareness is a starting point and we look forward to having the same activity next year. "

Standard Chartered and individuals from Alia for Early Intervention promoted the event internally and externally through social media. Each staff member from the Bank is entitled to 3 volunteering days per year where he/she can collect as a day in lieu at the end of the year. This is to encourage a volunteering culture across the Bank and promote 'giving back to the community' principle.

About Alia for Early Intervention:

Alia For Early Intervention offers evaluation, early Intervention Services and case management to eligible children and their families. Children eligible for services must be: at least eighteen months of age at the time of referral, and suspected of developmental delay or diagnosed with a physical or mental condition, resulting in a high probability of delay in the following areas:

- Cognitive development.
- Communication development.
- Social or emotional development.
- Physical development.

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