

# press release

## **Vision screening for children across Pakistan to mark World Sight Day**

**Karachi October 2012** – In celebration of World Sight Day, Standard Chartered Bank Pakistan conducted vision screening for 800 children in five cities across the country under its Pakistan Urban Paediatric (PUP) Eye Care Programme.

The Eye Care Programme was initiated last year to identify blind and low vision children and provide them with the required eye care services such as surgeries and provision of spectacles and low vision devices within the framework of National Eye Health Plan of Pakistan.

Some 130 volunteers comprising trained staff members of the Bank in partnership with government and NGOs helped conduct screening for underprivileged children in Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan and Faisalabad. All Standard Chartered staff get three voluntary paid leave days annually to encourage them to take part in any community projects.

Mr. Mohsin Nathani, Chief Executive, Standard Chartered Pakistan said, “Early eye screenings are critical for the health and wellbeing of children and this programme will hopefully ensure that every child has the gift of sight for many years to come. Undoubtedly, more could be done to eliminate avoidable blindness in the country and individual organisations like Standard Chartered can only be part of the solution. Through our staff, resources and client network we hope to raise new investment for the campaign, and World Sight Day provides an excellent opportunity to draw attention to the initiative.”

World Sight Day is a global event that focuses on bringing attention on blindness and vision impairment. It is observed on the second Thursday of October each year. Since the launch of its global charitable initiative Seeing is Believing (SiB) in 2004, the Bank had invested approximately PKR200 million (20 Crore) to help alleviate avoidable blindness in Pakistan. It has to date funded some 550,000 cataract operations attributing to a marked reduction in the prevalence of cataract blindness by 20% in the country.

Approximately 1.5 million people in Pakistan are blind mainly due to Cataract and corneal scarring. Yet, 80% of blindness and visual impairment is preventable or curable and treatments are simple and cost effective.

Globally, the economic cost of blindness is estimated to be US\$200 billion per year. Across the globe, 39 million people are blind and 246 million people suffer from visual impairment. With 90% of avoidable blindness occurring in the developing world, it is an issue which is of particular resonance in many markets where Standard Chartered operates.

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## **Notes to Editors:**

### **Standard Chartered – leading the way in Asia, Africa and the Middle East**

Standard Chartered is a leading international banking group. It has operated for over 150 years in some of the world's most dynamic markets and earns more than 90 per cent of its profits in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. This geographic focus and commitment to developing deep relationships with clients and customers has driven the Bank's growth in recent years. Standard Chartered PLC is listed on the London and Hong Kong stock exchanges as well as the Bombay and National Stock Exchanges in India.

With 1,700 offices in 70 markets, the Group offers exciting and challenging international career opportunities for nearly 87,000 staff. It is committed to building a sustainable business over the long term and is trusted worldwide for upholding high standards of corporate governance, social responsibility, environmental protection and employee diversity. Standard Chartered's heritage and values are expressed in its brand promise, 'Here for good'.

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### **Seeing is Believing**

Seeing is Believing is a global initiative to help tackle avoidable blindness, and is a collaboration between Standard Chartered and the International Agency for Prevention of Blindness (IAPB). IAPB is the leading umbrella organisation for non-governmental organisations working in the field of eye-care. Together with the World Health Organisation, it launched the 'Vision 2020 – The Right to Sight', a global campaign to eliminate avoidable blindness by 2020. To date, Seeing is Believing has raised over USD50 million for blindness initiatives and plans to raise a further USD50 million by 2020. Seeing is Believing is the single largest contributor to the development of Vision 2020 programmes through IAPB. As part of the Seeing is Believing programme, Standard Chartered pledges to match all donations until the target of USD100 million is reached.

[www.seeingisbelieving.org](http://www.seeingisbelieving.org)

### **Standard Chartered Pakistan**

Standard Chartered is the largest international Bank in Pakistan with 131 branches in 29 cities. Standard Chartered's core businesses in Pakistan are in Consumer Banking and Wholesale Banking.

Standard Chartered has been awarded "Best Bank in Pakistan" by The Asset Triple A Awards for 2011.

Standard Chartered Pakistan is the first international bank to get an Islamic Banking license and to open the first Islamic Banking branch in Pakistan. The Bank has been given credit ratings of AAA/ A1+, the highest long-term and short-term rating assigned by PACRA to any private sector commercial bank.

As part of the Bank's sustainability agenda, where we believe in giving back to the community we operate in, our efforts are also noticeable in the field of Education, Preventable Blindness (Seeing is Believing) and HiV Awareness among the youth.

For more information, please visit: [www.standardchartered.com.pk](http://www.standardchartered.com.pk)