

# press release

## STANDARD CHARTERED BANK INJECTS UGS 4.7BN INTO EYE CARE

**Mbale, Saturday 15 November 2011** – Standard Chartered Bank Uganda has announced an investment of UGS 4.7bn in its Seeing is Believing Drive - the fight against preventable blindness. This was at the World Sight Day / International White Cane Day National Celebrations at Maluku Gardens in Mbale. The funds will step up the campaign which was first launched in 2003 and has seen over 11,000 operations carried out on blind people to restore their sight.

The ceremony was presided over by the LC 5 Chairman for Mbale, Mr Bernard Mujasi who represented the Speaker of Parliament, Right Honourable Rebecca Kadaga. He thanked the Bank for its fight against preventable blindness in Uganda for the last 9 years, and is now being stepped up.

***“I would like on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Uganda to state that funds have been set aside to help people with visual impairment. I would also like to commend Standard Chartered Bank for leading the way in supporting the government to provide social services. We also thank Right to Play and the friends who have come in from Norway to give out glasses (spectacles) free of charge. As Government, we value the public-private sector approach to service delivery for this is the only way we can reach out to as many people as possible, considering that government resources are limited and the need is huge. ”*** Mr. Mujasi said.

Commenting on the reason for investing heavily in the fight against blindness, the Standard Chartered Bank Head of Corporate Affairs, Herbert Zake, stated that very many people still

needlessly go blind due to lack of simple treatment or costing UGS 60,000 per operation on average but which many people cannot afford. He stated that the Bank is here for people, here for progress and has a strong social responsibility for the communities in which it operates and that the management and staff are very passionate about making a difference in the lives of the less fortunate in society. He pledged the Bank's continued commitment to drive this agenda.

***“We are here for good and pledge our continued commitment to come up with innovative solutions for our customers and supporting communities where we operate. Standard Chartered will continue to invest in sustainable initiatives that will lead to people living a meaningful and dignified life. The Bank will invest UGS 4.7bn into the Seeing is Believing Campaign over the next 4-5 years to continue in the fight against preventable blindness. In addition, the Bank has organized a career fair on 9 November 2011 in Imperial Royale Hotel for disabled persons so that they can be interviewed by prospective employers. I call upon other companies and individuals to emulate what Standard Chartered has done. If we pool our resources and work together we can make a difference in people's lives. If we all work together and support government efforts there is a multiplier effect and we can move mountains.”*** Zake said.

The Chairperson of the Uganda National Association of the Blind, Frances Chandiru mentioned the challenges faced by the visually impaired.

*“There is a need to explore and exploit the potential of the blind by making them have access to education. They need to access Braille machines and Braille paper, and these are expensive. They should have access to computers. They should have white canes to facilitate their movement. When they have access to education they are capable of working like anyone else. They should have equal access to jobs because they can deliver as well as if not better than the sighted. They should also have access to agricultural programs like NAADS. That way, they can also live meaningful and fulfilling lives. I wish to thank Standard Chartered for supporting our cause over the year and for their commitment to continue supporting us”.* said Chandiru.

Standard Chartered Bank's support for the blind in the recent past started in 1998 when the Bank instituted the Best Blind Student initiative that ran between 1998 and 2000. The best blind students in primary schools were recognized and given awards. One such student is Boaz Muhumuza. He completed his Law Degree at Makerere University in 2010 and was the best in his class. He has just completed at the Law Development Centre.

Standard Chartered fully supported the University education of Ms Esther Kyoziira. She is now the Chairperson of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities and is also the Human Rights Project Coordinator for the National Union of Persons with Disabilities.

In 2007 Standard Chartered Bank Uganda Limited in partnership with Linear Consultants renovated a building block in Salaama School for the Blind, Mukono, at a cost of UGS 50m. The building is now being used for classrooms, a computer room and library. The roof had been blown off and the structure was dilapidated.

Through Seeing is Believing – the fight against preventable blindness – a partnership with Sightsavers and Standard Chartered customers, over 11,000 operations have been carried out since 2003 to restore sight to blind people. It is this project that is now being stepped up through an investment of UGS 4.7bn. This is part of a USG 5m project to cover East Africa. This in turn is part of a USD 100m which the Standard Chartered Group will have invested in this project across the areas where it operates worldwide between 2003 and 2020.

**Indicated here below are some shocking statistics.**

- There are an estimated 45 million blind and 135 million visually impaired people worldwide.
- Every 5 seconds, a person in the world goes blind.
- Every 30 seconds, a child in the world goes blind.
- In developing countries of which Uganda is inclusive, it is believed that 60% of children who become blind die at the age of 1-2 years, meaning that these countries are deprived of the productive future generation.
- 75 million people are likely to become blind by 2020 if trends continue like this.

- In Uganda an estimated 300,000 people are blind. Over half of these can regain their sight through operations.

-ENDS -

## Notes to Editors

### Standard Chartered Bank in Uganda

Standard Chartered Bank Uganda is a member of the Standard Chartered Group. The Bank has been operating in Uganda for over 99 years. As Uganda's first bank, established in 1912, it currently has a network of 11 branches, 29 ATMs spread across the country. The Bank employs over 600 people. Standard Chartered's core businesses in Uganda are in Consumer Banking and Wholesale Banking (Origination & Client Coverage and Global Markets) products and services.

Standard Chartered is committed to the community in Uganda through various community relations programs, working closely with the Ministry of Health, Uganda Red Cross, Sight Savers International and Water Aid. The Bank's philanthropic work in Uganda was recognized when it won two awards from the Federation of Uganda Employers.

Standard Chartered Bank won the Euromoney Award for Best Bank in Uganda, 2009 and 2010, the emea Finance Best Bank in Uganda in 2009, 2010 and 2011, and was recognized by Consumer Insights as the best bank in customer service in Uganda. The Bank also won the Federation of Uganda Employer's Award for best in Training and Development for 2008 and best in HR MIS in 2009.

### 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 income and 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 around 85,000 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'.

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

For more information, please contact

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