

# press release

## Standard Chartered donates a state of the art machine to Masvingo Province Eye Care Programme to restore eye sight to the under privileged

*Standard Chartered aims to restore sight to the under privileged in the community under the Seeing is Believing initiative.*

**Masvingo, Morgenster Mission Hospital, 10 October, 2013** – Standard Chartered Bank has donated a state of the art machine (an ophthalmoscope) to Morgenster Mission Hospital in its endeavour to tackle avoidable blindness. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, through its Masvingo Province Eye Care Programme (MPECP), based at Morgenster Mission, was, earlier this year selected as an implementing partner of the Bank's "Seeing is Believing" (SiB) programme to prevent and treat avoidable blindness in Zimbabwe. Seeing Is Believing is a global philanthropic initiative, which is dedicated to tackling avoidable blindness. In Zimbabwe, it is estimated that at least 50% of blindness is due to cataracts, the most common cause of blindness and a condition which is wholly treatable through surgery.

SiB is a partnership between Standard Chartered Bank and the International Agency for Prevention of Blindness (IAPB). Together with the World Health Organisation, SiB launched the 'Vision 2020 – The Right to Sight', a global campaign to eliminate avoidable blindness by 2020. Against this background, Standard Chartered Bank Zimbabwe decided to partner with Masvingo Eye Care Programme to contribute towards this global goal.

Under the project, Standard Chartered Bank Zimbabwe has donated \$20,000 towards equipment and medical support at Morgenster Mission for 2013.

In addition to the ophthalmoscope donated today, an Eye Camp was also held in the Chikombedzi area, 100km from Chiredzi, from 9 – 13 June 2013. The sight restoration camp was conducted by a team of eye specialists from Morgenster Mission as part of their outreach programme for the under-privileged. In addition to the monetary donation, Standard Chartered Bank staff members also participated in the eye camp under the Bank's Employee Volunteering programme. Under the Bank's Employee Volunteering programme, employees are encouraged to take three days paid leave a year to volunteer on projects aligned with Standard Chartered's community and environmental programmes.

Commenting on the initiative, Ralph Watungwa, Chief Executive Officer said:

"Seeing is Believing is one of the Bank's global initiatives that demonstrates our brand promise, to be Here for good. In Zimbabwe, we continue to maintain our long-standing commitment to the country, and this project is another demonstration of our dedication to

our staff, and to the communities in which we operate. Every five seconds someone in the world goes blind. About 90% of blind people live in developing countries, where access to affordable eye-care is limited. But, 80% of blindness can be treated or prevented, for example a cataract operation costs on average US\$250, We are proud to be contributing towards restoring the sight of our fellow Zimbabweans through the very good work of the Masvingo Eye Care Programme.”

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**For more information or interview opportunities, please contact:**

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**Note to Editors:**

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