

# press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Standard Chartered Bank partners with Friendship to deliver eye health care to coastal communities**

**Dhaka, 16 January 2018:** An MoU has been signed between Standard Chartered Bank and Friendship in the capital today (Tuesday).

The initiative will work to reduce avoidable blindness for the marginalized, hard-to-reach communities in coastal belt of Bangladesh by proving quality eye care services, including eye screening and cataract removal surgery, through the Rangdhanu Friendship Hospital. Friendship's hospital ship, Rangdhanu Friendship Hospital, has provided more than 165,000 health services since starting operation in 2013.

Mr. Naser Ezaz Bijoy, CEO, Standard Chartered Bank signed the MoU on behalf of Standard Chartered Bank and Ms. Runa Khan, Founder and Executive Director, Friendship signed on behalf of Friendship.

This year Standard Chartered is celebrating 15th year of its 'Seeing is Believing' project which has helped over 150 million people by funding 160 eye-care projects in under-privileged communities globally. 'Seeing is Believing' is Standard Chartered's global flagship community that began its journey in 2003 right here in Bangladesh with the building of an operation theatre and a Children's Ward at Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute & Hospital.

Mr. Naser Ezaz Bijoy, CEO, Standard Chartered Bank said, "The bank is committed to investing in local communities across Bangladesh, reaching some of the most vulnerable segments of our society, addressing some of their most pressing needs. I am particularly excited about this project, as the Rangdhanu Friendship Hospital will help us combat avoidable blindness in hard-to-reach communities along Bangladesh's coastal belt, where access to formal healthcare can be a challenge."

Bitopi Das Chowdhury, Country Head of Corporate Affairs, Standard Chartered Bank and Mr. Golam Rasul, Director and Head of Health, Friendship were also present on this occasion.

**-ENDS-**

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**About Friendship**

Friendship is a needs-based organization nurturing the dignity and hope in vulnerable communities in Bangladesh. The organization began by working in close collaboration with the local communities to understand their needs since 2002. With their 15 years of day-to-day experience they have developed an integrated development model, which includes health, education, Disaster Management and Infrastructure Development, Good Governance, Sustainable Economic Development and Cultural Preservation.

**About Rongdhonu Friendship Hospital (RFH)**

In August 2011, Greenpeace International donated its former flagship Rainbow Warrior II to Friendship. The vessel was converted into a hospital ship and, since January 2013, operates in the coastal areas of the Bay of Bengal in Southern Bangladesh. The Rongdhonu Friendship Hospital ship serves on average 40,000 patients per year.