

Standard Chartered to open academy in Bihar for training women to become optometrists

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Standard Chartered Bank has announced the opening of an academy to train women to become optometrists. This new training academy in Samastipur (Bihar), aims to train 95 young women in the first batch to become optometrists, which will aid in transforming lives and increasing access to critical eye health services in this region.

The academy in Bihar is the fourth overall after Delhi, Hyderabad (Telangana) and Madurai (Tamil Nadu). So far, more than 120,000 youth of which majority are women have been trained to promote primary eye care and build an ecosystem that generates employment opportunities, fosters innovation, enables capacity building and training.

Standard Chartered has also announced plans to open 17 new vision centres across India, under its 'Seeing is Believing' programme, an initiative to eradicate avoidable blindness. The new centres will be set up across various districts, with the help of partner agencies, in the state of Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, taking the total number of vision centres to 617 in the country.

Speaking about the efforts, Karuna Bhatia, Head of Sustainability, India, Standard Chartered Bank, said, "The Bank through the 'Seeing is Believing' programme has made significant positive impact in tackling avoidable blindness in the country especially in remote locations with more than 80% of the vision centres being self-sustaining. The Bank is strategically building capability in the eye healthcare sector through its futuristic vision centres and training academies while empowering women to become vision technicians. The other key strategic direction that this programme is taking is to eliminate blindness area by area."