

## News Letters

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### **Al-Shifa Receives distinguished international AGFUND Prize**



You will be glad to know that recently Al-Shifa Trust has been awarded the coveted international prize by The Arab Gulf Program for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND).



This award is indeed a great honor for Pakistan and Al-Shifa Trust. AGFUND is a non-profit regional development institution, established in 1980 by the initiative of HRM Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, with the support of the leaders of the Arab Gulf States that constitute its membership and contribute to its budget. The AGFUND gives annual award to top few projects around the world after comprehensive evaluation of their performance. This year the Prize Committee approved three winning projects, including one from Al-Shifa Trust from among 35 projects from 24 countries in 4 continents. The Prize Committee membership comprised a number of renowned world figures, like, Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Ali, President of the Islamic Development Bank, Noble Prize Winner of 2007, Professor Muhammad Yunus, Dr. Y. Seyyid Abdulai, and former Director General of the OPEC Fund for International Development etc...

This is a moment of pride for Pakistan, for our donors, and for dedicated team of Al-Shifa Trust. We take this opportunity to thank our donors without whom we could not have achieved all this. We are especially grateful to Dr. H E Gezairy, Dr. Pararajasegaram and Prof Marilyn Miller. In addition we are also indebted to our international partners in prevention and control of blindness like ORBIS intl USA, OEU Canada, Lions Club Intl USA and IDRf Canada. We also express our thanks to AGFUND for bestowing this honor on Al-Shifa from amongst 35 projects of 24 countries spread over Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.



Our readers may recall that earlier, Al-Shifa Trust has been awarded with the best

partnership award by WHO in March 2006 and a Gold Medal by Ophthalmological Society of Pakistan in Dec 2007.

### **Al-Shifa Launches Light House**

Al-Shifa Trust has launched a major project – Light House – to help the people with incurable visual loss. This will enable people with low vision and blindness to enjoy safe, independent and productive lives.



Five million people in Pakistan suffer from low vision. For these the only way forward is to maximize their residual vision potential by special devices and counseling at different level. However lack of infrastructure, lack of trained skillful staff and paucity of funds for such type of services in Pakistan has been the stumbling block. Al-Shifa, despite its limited resources was the first in Pakistan to establish a low vision center back in 1994 and then it pioneered the establishment of over a dozen such centers all over Pakistan by providing the trained professionals. Now Al-Shifa has introduced in Pakistan the concept of Light House to cater for all the needs of visually disabled persons under one roof; to provide latest facilities for reading, writing, telecommunication, to provide facilities for different age groups and to cater for occupational needs of people with low vision or no vision. Under the project latest computerized facilities for reading, writing, computing, electronic mailing and occupational counseling have been set up. Separate sections - Senior Corner for elderly low vision patients, Junior Corner for young clients with low vision and a Rehab corner for people with low vision enabling them to carry out activities of daily living are also now in place.

**Senior Corner:** The facilities for elderly with low vision include: -

- In-home need assessments and low vision examination
- Introduction of safe, new ways to cook and to take care of home by providing special tools like custom made utensils, magnifying lamps etc.
- Desktop electronic video magnifiers are available to help visually impaired individuals read the newspaper, manage their finances, and lead productive lives through mainstream employment and enjoy hobbies

**Junior Corner:** The facilities for young clients with low vision include: -

- A Parent Center which will be helping them to understand the problems of their children with low vision.
- Special electronic and TV magnifiers along with simulators are available for pursuing studies unhindered despite vision handicap.
- Special computer software is available which helps in magnifying everything on computer screen and helps the youngsters to do their learning through cyber technology.
- A play and entertainment corner with special gadgets for children with low vision



### **Rehab Corner:**

- Wide range of educational, social, recreational, job training experiences are offered to help youngsters with low vision enter into practical world with confidence.
- Home rehabilitation and training are provided through useful home adaptations for the blind and visually impaired. For example large button remote controls and bioptic telescope will help you enjoy your favorite television program.
- Similarly, talking items like talking thermometer, talking watch etc. are also available for people with special needs.

We need your Support

### **We need your support**

The cost for this setup is Rs. 100 million out of which Rs. 25 million has been made available by donors from Pakistan.

***Your support can reshape the lives of many. Please act instantly***

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