Dubai Cares three-year integrated HGSF pilot programme in Ethiopia is being implemented in 80 schools to address the school health and nutrition (SHN) needs of approximately thousands of primary school age children in the Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples' Region (SNNPR).

"**Dubai Cares launched this three-year programme to contribute to the evidence base and facilitate informed decision-making and scale-up not only in Ethiopia but also in other countries across the world** ." said Tariq Al Gurg, Chief Executive Officer of Dubai Cares at the press conference of the programme launch held in Ethiopia.

According to the World Food Programme (WFP) , 66 million primary school-age children attend classes hungry across the developing world, with 23 million in Africa alone.

The $(US)4 million Dubai Cares funded pilot programme in Ethiopia is based on a contemporary, cost-effective, nationally-owned and sustainable school health and nutrition model, which aims to enhance primary school enrolment rates, reduce absenteeism and improve the learning abilities of the children in the region.

An Integrated Programme

The programme is being implemented by WFP, Partnership for Child Development (PCD) , SN V-Netherlands and the

[Ethiopia Health and Nutrition Research Institute](#)
(EHNRI) and sees the provision of in-school meals prepared from locally sourced commodities, thus promoting pupil enrolment in schools at the same time as
providing a valuable opportunity for farmers and producers who can sell their product for use in school meals.

Iain Gardiner, East Africa Regional Coordinator for PCD, said, "**The Dubai Cares funded HGSF programme is a leading example of how different stakeholders can effectively pool their expertise to make a real impact on the health, education and wealth of farming communities in Ethiopia   .**"

He added, "**As part of the programme, researchers will be conducting one of the largest school health monitoring surveys ever undertaken within Ethiopia. Using this new evidence base, we will be able to ensure that interventions are targeted to where they are most needed   .**"

Complimentary Activities - WASH and Deworming

In addition to the HGSF component, the pilot is also inclusive of deworming treatment and Water, Sanitation '&' Hygiene (WASH) in schools.

Derese Getisa, Representative of the Regional Education Bureau in SNNPR, said, "**Our region is fortunate to host the HGSF pilot programme, which has been supported by Dubai Cares. This project stimulates the local economy by purchasing food commodities from farmer's associations, and it also supports complementary activities such as deworming and WASH to help the children reach their full growth and academic potential**"
.

Over 600 million school-age children worldwide are infected with parasitic worms which severely affects child health and learning abilities, improving access to safe water, adequate sanitation, and proper hygiene education also reduces illness and death from disease.

Filming the project

A television crew filming for a Dubai humanitarian documentary series, *Sanad* were also

present at the launch to document the Ethiopia project as part of the series. For this, PCD's SHN Research Consultant, Elodie Yard and EHNRI Programme Manager, Gemechu Liet were interviewed, where they outlined PCD's and EHNRI's role in the programme and the importance of strengthening evidenced based research.

- The Ethiopia project is due to be featured on Dubai TV One (in Arabic) on 25 August.

More news on the same story

- Gulf News, Poor Ethiopian Farmer Speaks of Anguish and Hope
- Middle East North Africa Financial Network, Dubai Cares launches 3-year HGSF program in Ethiopia
- Albawaba Press, Dubai Cares launches a 3-year Home Grown School Feeding pilot program in Ethiopia
- The National, Free school meals for 40,000 Ethiopian pupils, thanks to UAE charity
- Dubai Cares launches a 3-year Home Grown School Feeding pilot program in Ethiopia
- SNV Ethiopia, Partners Launch Home Grown School Feeding Programme