




The Energy and Water Knowledge Centre in the United Arab Emirates



ICRC

We help people around the world affected by armed conflict and other violence, doing everything we can to protect their lives and dignity and to relieve their suffering, often with our Red Cross and Red Crescent partners. We also seek to prevent hardship by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and championing universal humanitarian principles.



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Humanitarian work and the environment

At the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), we are committed to making our humanitarian response more sustainable. As set out in our institutional strategy (2019–2022), we will help communities affected by armed conflict and other violence to develop their ability to absorb the impact of conflict and climate change. We will also reduce our own operational footprint. Simply put, our actions must improve a community's ability to manage resources and must not, albeit inadvertently, damage the environment.

We need to scale up training opportunities quickly in sustainable energy and water-supply technologies in the Near and Middle East. So, to meet our ambitious goals, we are setting up, in collaboration with local partners, the Energy and Water Knowledge Centre.

What do we need during the first phase to make this happen?

Our current partners in this field of work, Schneider Electric, Grundfos and the Paul Due Jensen Foundation, will be brought on board for both purposes.

ICRC staff in the United Arab Emirates have started identifying potential partners and seeking guidance from a deep pool of talented experts in the country, which was one of the main reasons we selected this location.

The hub will work with universities and private partners, obtaining their input to ensure that we draw on technical solutions suited to specific contexts and needs. Our training will combine scientific, technical and traditional approaches for managing water and energy.

And then?

Our ambition is global. We will continue to build on our close partnership with our stakeholders. Training will be provided beyond the Near and Middle East, potentially extending to staff in the Asia–Pacific region.



Hagos TEFAGABIR/ICRC

- 2. Partnerships for policy:** The centre will bring together a community of actors from the development, financial and private sectors, foundations, academia and other humanitarian organizations that run energy projects and face similar challenges. This community will find innovative solutions that draw on new technologies. Ultimately, the hope is that the centre will become a key body for discussing and influencing the issues surrounding sustainable humanitarian work.

The Energy and Water Knowledge Centre

The Energy and Water Knowledge Centre, based in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), will increase our capacity for future energy and climate-related projects and lay the foundation for broader organizational development. Moreover, given that a single organization can never have all the answers for an issue as complex as ensuring sustainable humanitarian action, the centre will constitute a novel format or prototype for future partnerships.

The centre will have two distinct yet connected purposes:

- 1. Learning and Development:** The centre will host in-person classes and provide technical laboratories to train ICRC staff. Classes will be tailored to staff members' own experience and expertise. We aim to train around 60 staff members a year initially, increasing capacity where necessary. One of our goals is to ensure that staff apply the skills acquired, the impact and then rippling out to other sustainable water and energy projects. Given our close partnership with water and energy ministries across the Near and Middle East, we may also offer technical training and capacity-building for staff from water- and power-supply partners, as well as National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.