

Director

Magdalena Salazar Palma

Goals

- 1) The Region 8 (R8) Director is the Chair of the R8 Committee, which consists of the Operating Committee or OpCom (which besides the Director includes the Past Director, Director Elect, Treasurer, Secretary, and the three Vice Chairs for Student Activities, Member Activities, and Technical Activities), the Section Chairs, and the various Sub Committees (SC) under the purview of the Directors, Treasurer, Secretary, or Vice Chairs (VC). Special mention should be made of the Africa Council. As R8 Committee Chair the job of the Director is to support and oversee the Committee operations an also includes supporting Section Chairs, and strongly supporting the VCs, the various Sub Committees and the Africa Council in their strategy and goals.

The Director's goals are aligned with the goals of the Sections and Sub Sections, VCs, SCs, and Africa Council.

Concrete goals include all those defined in the previous report of March 2020. However, because of the disruption on R8 operations caused by the pandemic and its consequences (membership decline, adoption of new ways of doing business, mainly online) a redefinition of the strategy of all SCs was needed and has been supported by the Director.

- 2) R8 Director serves as member of IEEE MGAB and as member of the IEEE Board of Directors (BoD). Besides attending the various meetings of the MGAB and BoD, this part of the job includes supporting their strategy and operations. Thus, the Director's goals are aligned with those of the MGAB and BoD. The Director is also member of IEEE Governance Committee, the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Inclusion and Professional Ethics, Chair of the IEEE Kiyo Tomiyasu Award Committee (one of the IEEE Technical Field Awards), member of the IEEE Technical Field Awards Council, member of the IEEE Ad Hoc Committee on Future-Proofing Healthy Volunteer Pipelines throughout the IEEE, member of the working group on the IEEE App of TAB Strategic Planning Subcommittee, and others committees. Concrete goals include:
 - Devising and supporting MGAB Strategic Plan, in particular for the future structure of Regions
 - Support IEEE BoD strategy, and in particular, for 2020, on Educational Activities,
 - Support IEEE BoD activities on diversity, inclusion and ethics.
 - Support the IEEE various Committees to achieve their goals in terms of reviewing the Governance Documents, and so on.

Status

- R8 Statistics and Achievements
- Membership statistics:
As of September 2020 and comparing with September 2019, there is a decrease of 4,989 members, i.e., a 7.1% decrease, with a total of 64,936 members:
 - 49,868 Higher Grade Members (-2,042, -3.9%)
 - 8,096 Graduate Student members (-1,243, -13.3%)
 - 6,972 Student members (-1,704, -19.6%).

At the IEEE level, there has been a global decrease of 6.5%. The impact of the pandemic is evident. In the case of R8 it has affected mainly the retention of Graduate students and the recruitment of Students. There are 39,561 R8 members who are Society members giving a percentage of 61%, higher than the percentage at the global IEEE level.
- R8 OUs statistics:
 - 1 Council;
 - 59 Sections;
 - 10 Subsections; four African countries (Ethiopia, Lybia, Namibia, and Rwanda) are potential candidates for new Subsections;
 - 615 Chapters;
 - 106 Affinity Groups (AG), including 2 Consultant Network Affinity Groups in Nigeria Section and Tunisia Section.
 - 669 Student Branches;
 - 425 Student Branch Chapters;
 - 146 Student Affinity Groups;
- R8 activities and achievements:
 - A WIE International Leadership Summit (ILS) planned in Kampala, Uganda, 15-16 October 2020, was held online. A second one planned in Genoa, Italy, in November 2020 has been postponed for 2021.
 - Three R8 flagship conferences took place online:
 - Educon 2020, Porto, Portugal, 27-30 April
 - Melecon 2020, Palermo, Italy, 16-18 June
 - Energycon 2020, Tunis, Tunisia, 28 Sept.-1 Oct.
 - The R8 Students and Young Professionals Congress, which takes place every other year, was supposed to be held in Gothenburg, Sweden (August 2020) but was cancelled because of the pandemic. A R8 Virtual SYP Congress, as a series of online events, took place on September 14-26, 2020.
 - A milestone was approved for Italy Section: Multiple Silicon Technologies on a Chip, 1985.
 - Three IEEE Technical Field Awards (out of 29) have been awarded to R8 members:
 - Richard Harold Kaufmann Award: Stephen Dominick James McArthur, UK
 - Marie Sklodowska-Curie Award: Michel Defrise, Belgium
 - Nikola Tesla Award: Zi-Qiang Zhu, UK.

- During the 2020 IEEE Annual Elections, four R8 members have been elected as 2021 Director-Elect or VP-Elect:
 - Division I: Franco Maloberti, Italy Section
 - Division V: Cecilia Metra, Italy Section
 - Division IX: Ali H. Sayed, Switzerland Section
 - Technical Activities: Bruno Meyer, France Section
- Director's calendar from previous R8 Committee meeting:
 - IEEE Treasurer's briefings, via WebEx, April 30, May 29, August 31, October 30, 2020
 - R8 OpCom meeting, via WebEx, April 18, June 11, July 17, 2020; face-to-face, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal, October 3-4, 2020
 - R8 N&A SC meeting, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal, October 5, 2020
 - IEEE Meeting Series, including MGAB, IEEE Assembly and IEEE BoD meetings, via WebEx, June 25-29, 2020
 - IEEE BoD meetings, via WebEx, April 17, April 24, May 21, September 30, 2020
 - IEEE Assembly, via WebEx, May 21, 2020
 - Attended other WebEx meetings: MGA Com. and other committees
 - Status of actions taken to achieve the goals:
 - The Section Vitality and Development Sub Committee (SVD SC) has continued its work towards supporting Section elections and annual reporting, assessment of the petitions for the formation of new subsections. Guidelines to facilitate the work of petitioners have been made available. .
 - The Vice Chairs for Student Activities, Member Activities and Technical Activities and the corresponding SCs have done an outstanding job in maintaining high quality events.
 - To be highlighted: R8 News is transitioning from the previous EiC (Alistair Dabbs) to a new one (Cátia Bandeiras).
 - The Strategic Planning Subcommittee has continued its efforts towards contributing to Region Realignment among other issues.
 - R8 OpCom members have participated in Africa Council meetings and viceversa.
- The pandemic has affected R8 operations since March 2020 in many ways:
 - Membership decline, due mainly to the disruption of face-to-face activities and networking
 - Most events have been organized online
 - R8 expenses have reduced Taking into account those facts R8 OpCom organized two meetings:
 - Meeting with R8 Section Chairs and OpCom members on 13 June 2020. The scope of the meeting was to present the call for proposals for the organization of distributed hybrid meetings as defined by OpCom in its 11 June 2020 meeting. Sections sent beforehand a brief report of the virtual activities held during the lockdown period of the pandemic. It should be pointed out that in most Sections the level of activity was quite high. The call was well received. All participants were able to express their opinion.
 - Meeting with R8 Subcommittee Chairs and OpCom members on 20 June 2020, with identical scope as the previous meeting. Subcommittee Chairs sent a brief report of the virtual activities held during the lockdown of the pandemic. It should be pointed out that in all Subcommittees kept a high level of activity. Again the call was well received. All participants were able to express their opinion. Nevertheless only few Sections/SCs submitted proposals for hybrid meetings. Those which fulfilled the conditions were funded by the Region.
- Sections reports show a high level of local activities and engagement during these months, most of them as online events.
- R8 OUs have learnt the many advantages of online events, however in person activities are crucial for R8 operations.

Outlook

Local activities at the Section and Subsection level are the basis of IEEE. The operation of all R8 Sub Committees is vital to increase the benefits offered to R8 members and make IEEE their professional home. R8 OpCom will be overseeing and trying to help the operations of Sub Committees, Sections, Subsections, and Africa Council particularly at this time of the pandemic.

Points of Concern

The finance situation of the Region is a point of concern. In 2019 Region 8 spent less than it was planned. The Treasurer and the Finance Sub Committee worked out a more realistic budget for 2020. However the pandemic has disrupted the expected output. The R8 has spent very little money because R8 Committee meetings are being held online. It is difficult to assess how the pandemic situation, the decline in membership, and eventually, possible changes in the membership dues and assessments, will impact R8 operations and finances. R8 has requested MGA to make exceptions to the use of R8 surplus and reserves as needed in 2021 and while normal operations are not possible.

Other Issues to report

- A new R8 visual identity has been designed by the IEEE Digital Creative and Innovations team in collaboration with R8 Director and Director-Elect. A motion for R8 Committee approval will be presented and the meeting.
- 7 Region 8 volunteers passed away since March 2020. Resolutions on their behalf and their families will be proposed during the meeting. They are:
 - Toomas Parve, IEEE Estonia Section IM/ED/EMB Joint Chapter Chair (2014-2018)
 - Walter E. Proebster, Germany Section Chair (1979) and Region 8 Director (1981-1982)
 - Istvan Vajda, Hungary Section Vice Chair (2010-2014)

- Mojtaba Khederzadeh, Iran Section volunteer
- Odieari Obuabereibama Oruye, one of the Nigeria Section founders
- Peter Excell, life senior member and volunteer, UK & Ireland Section
- Ece Alpugan, student member and volunteer, Middle East Technical University Student Branch, Turkey Section.