Humanitarian Activities Committeee (HTAC)   Samarth Deo

Composition

- Samarth Deo (Sweden) (*Chair*)
- Nour Sbaoulji (Tunisia)
- George Papadimitriou (Switzerland)
- Lucija Brezočnik (Slovenia)
- Omar Salameh (Jordan)
- Abdulla Al-Kaff (Spain)

- Resala Aldraj (Bahrain)
- Ahmed Ayman (Egypt)
- Fairouz Fattoum (France)
- Kai Goodall (South Africa)
- Theodoros Chatzinikolaou (Greece) (*Past-Chair*)

Goals (continuing from last year)

R8 HTA Committee goal is to promote the programs and initiatives set by the IEEE Humanitarian Technologies Board (HTB), and in doing so- help the IEEE community build a better world for tomorrow.
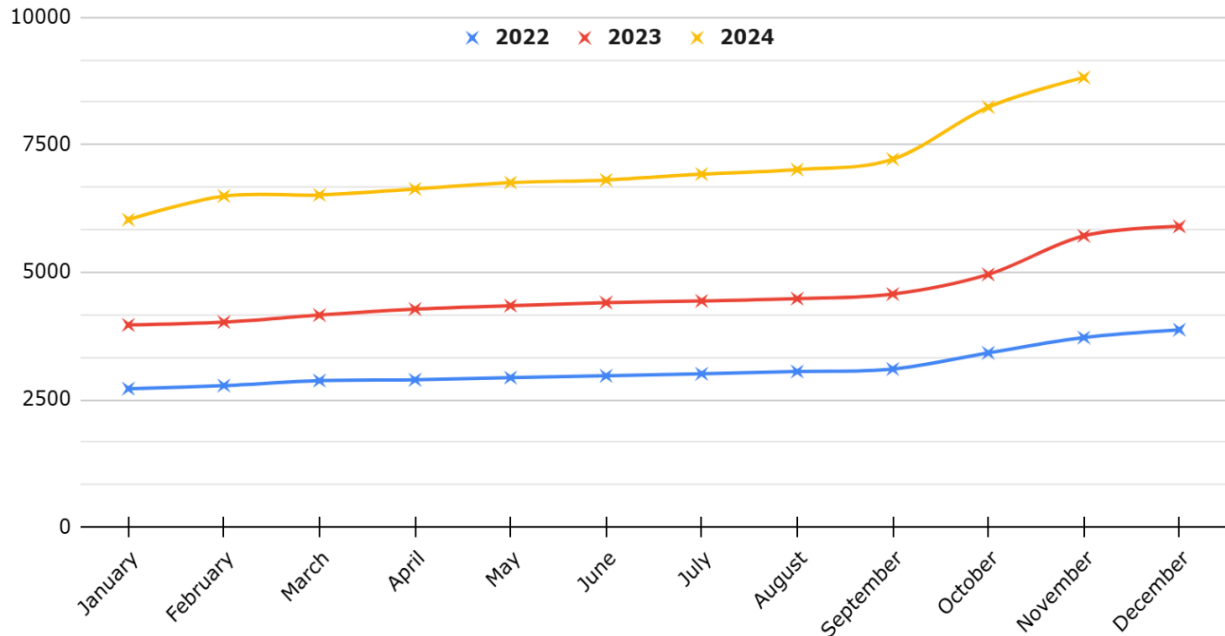
In particular, our goals include:

• Supports SIGHT groups activities and encourage them to participate in Regional humanitarian technology activities,

• Develops programs and initiatives to enable volunteer engagement in humanitarian technology activities,

• Reviews and evaluates of the overall effectiveness of humanitarian programs,

• Recommends best practices as they relate to programs and projects,

• Evaluates of funding proposals for projects to be carried out at the local level,

• Connects with humanitarian volunteers and builds the optimal humanitarian team in the Region,

• Mentors existing SIGHT groups and prospective groups,

• Increases visibility of humanitarian technology activities within the Region using social media and events across the region,

• Encourages reporting of activities via vTools by monitoring and reaching out,

• Raises awareness of ongoing HTB/SIGHT activities,

• Encourages submission of HTB/SIGHT project proposals and proposals for funding of activities,

• Encourages students and young professionals' involvement in humanitarian technology activities,

• Organizes R8 Humanitarian Activities Congress when budget allows and collaborates in organizing humanitarian conferences,

• Recognizes exceptional SIGHT groups and volunteers,

• Collaborates and establishes partnerships with other IEEE OUs, with external organizations and other entities with

similar goals on humanitarian projects.

Progress against goals since the last report

Besides the programs run under the umbrella of HTB, R8 HTA Committee also started several interesting initiatives the last two years that resonated with the local groups (SIGHT groups or sections). This included an award program called the R8 Humanitarian Awards, and support programs such as Community Support Program among others. This year, EPICS in IEEE also joins the list of programs. HTAC will help market and announce call for proposals for programs including EPICS in IEEE during the year.

As for SIGHT groups within Region 8, we touched an all-time high of around 9100 members as in the graph below.

– SIGHT Membership

EPICS in IEEE within Region 8 saw a massive increase in the number of submissions last year. There were 66 proposals submitted, far more than any of the previous years.

There were several webinars and workshops conducted during region 8 conferences in 2024, notably the RTSI and IHTC. The R8 Humanitarian Congress was also conducted in collaboration with the IHTC conference.

Humanitarian Activities Committee Issues and Concerns:

1) Several similar initiatives within the same umbrella make it confusing sometimes for the audience to connect with and pick one over the other.
2) Change of leadership and new committee members lead to a learning curve that requires time to build the same momentum as the previous year closed with.
3) May need increased budget due to the number of events and congresses the committee is invited to, to hold workshops and speak at.

Proposals for improvements

- Work closely with HTB to plan and participate in different call for proposals during the year. A cadence calendar has been requested to HTB that may help us plan better.
- Make use of aggregated social media posting, an offering from HTB. It will help streamline the messages, lower the administration around posting on different platforms.
- Plan to have atleast one face to face meeting of the entire committee to bring everyone upto speed with all the different activities.
- Have sub-groups that can focus on specific programs within HTAC to be able to *divide and conquer* and offer the best to all across the region.
- Collaborate with other committees and sub-committees within R8 (SAC, YP, WIE among others) when conducting any event. This will help us know about the other committees better and we can use economies of scale in practice.