



# FIDE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN'S CHESS

**WOM Activity Report for 2025**

**Anastasia Sorokina  
FIDE WOM Chair**

# FIDE Commission for Women's Chess composition 2022-2026



Commission  
for Women's  
Chess



## Members

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Chen, Mei Fang Dina (TPE)

Khamboo, Monalisha (NEP)

Rich, Tony (USA)

Meyer, Carol B (USA)

# WOM PROJECTS

## **Chess4all & All4Chess**

encouraging global participation of girls and women in chess

## **Queens' and Princesses' Festival**

series of continental women's online blitz tournaments

## **ChessMom**

providing support for professional chess players who are mothers of infants

## **Queens' Gambit Challenge**

creating and support of new national female teams

## **Chess for Protection**

chess for refugees

## **Chess seminars for ladies**

in cooperation with FIDE Commissions

## **Chess4Peace**

refugee woman training programme

## **Chess Ladies Art Film Milestone**

Queen Trap by Juga

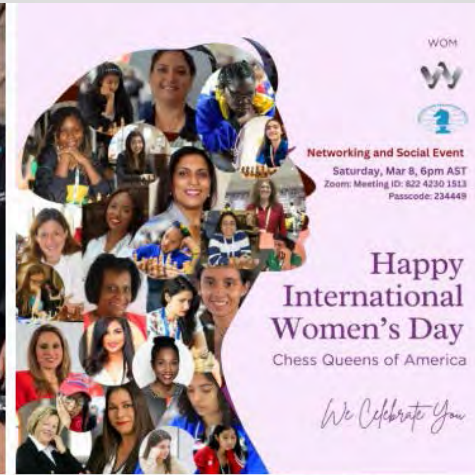
# WOM PROJECTS



# WOM PROJECTS

## Chess4all & All4Chess

### Project's geography:



**3rd Queens Rapid Chess Tournament 2025**  
FIDE Rated

Date: 8th March 2025  
Time Control: 25min/ player  
Format: 7 Rounds  
Venue : Clarion Hotel  
Deadline For Registration: 7th March 2025

Entry Fee:  
Adults: Ksh. 500  
Junior (Girls): Ksh. 300

**PRIZE FUND**

1. ksh.20,000	6. Ksh. 2,000
2. Ksh.10,000	7. Ksh. 1,000
3. Ksh.7,500	8. Ksh. 1,000
4. Ksh. 5,000	9. Ksh. 1,000
5. Ksh. 3,000	10. Ksh. 1,000

LINK:  
[CHESSKENYA.CO.KE/EVENTS/REGISTER/12](https://chesskenya.co.ke/events/register/12)

**CONTACT INFO**  
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Nanak House, Nairobi



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- Stavanger, Norway
- Singapore
- Auckland, New Zealand
- Stockholm, Sweden
- Melbourne Gold Coast, Australia
- Toronto, Canada
- Tallinn, Estonia
- Baku, Azerbaijan
- Caracas, Venezuela
- Menorca, Spain
- Yerevan, Armenia
- Warsaw, Poland
- St.Lucia
- Cote d'Ivoire
- Ghana
- Botswana
- South Africa
- **To be continued...**

# WOM PROJECTS

## Chess4all & All4Chess.

### Global Celebration of Women and Girls in Chess

- Across the world, remarkable initiatives were held this March to celebrate Women's Day through chess. WOM was proud to support and collaborate with events that highlight the strength, resilience, and talent of women in chess.
- Our key partnerships this year include:
  - ❖ **Confederation of Chess for the Americas (CCA)** and national chess federations for the special event, Queens of the Board: Celebrating Women in Chess (hybrid format).
  - ❖ **Kazakhstan Chess Federation** for The Qazaq Queens Chess Fest 2025, Almaty.
  - ❖ **14th edition of one of the strongest festivals focused on women's chess – Women's Chess Festival – Radzikowska Memorial.**
  - ❖ **Polish Chess Federation** at Memorial of Apolonia Litwinska – rapid event for women&girls.



# WOM PROJECTS

## Chess4all & All4Chess.

### Global Celebration of Women and Girls in Chess

- ❖ **Saint-Tropez chess club, France** for a simultaneous exhibition against 24 opponents, led by the Ukrainian quad sisters, the Prochaievs (Alina, Tina, Yelyzaveta and Olha, all aged 15).
- ❖ **Chess Kenya** at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Queens Rapid Chess Tournament.
- ❖ **Prague Chess Festival for Futures** Tournament and inspiring lecture and simul by WGM Dana Reizniece.

This 1st edition of celebrations has gathered over **40 events in 30 countries** celebrating women and girls in chess.

It is a truly promising step and we hope it will grow each year— showing how chess is a powerful force for connection, confidence, and change.



# WOM PROJECTS

## Queens' and Princesses' Festival

- The Queens' Online Chess Festival 2025 once again united female chess players from across the globe in an exciting month-long celebration of competition, talent, and empowerment. The event featured two main competitions: the Queens' Women Open Tournament and the Unrated Princesses' Tournament. Spanning from **March 1st to March 29th**, the Festival included continental qualifiers, semifinals, and the grand finals.
- The Queens' Online Chess Festival 2025 proved once again that chess is a powerful platform for women's empowerment. With **121 countries represented** and nearly **1,000 players signing up**, the event showed the increasing enthusiasm for women's chess and highlighted the need for even greater accessibility and inclusivity in future editions.



### The winners of the Queen's Festival 2025:

- 🏆 1st place – **Aliona Garmash** 👑 (FIDE)
- 🥈 2nd place – **Zoey Tang** 🏆 (USA)
- 🥉 3rd place – **Nataliya Buksa** 🏆 (Ukraine)

### The winners of the Princesses' tournament 2025:

- U09 🏆 1st place – **Swetha Narayanan** (England)
- U11 🏆 1st place – **Hima Srinika Alla** (India)
- U13 🏆 1st place – **Shiho Yula Katayama** (Japan)
- U15 🏆 1st place – **Yarroju Ramya** (India)
- U17 🏆 1st place – **Lee-Anne Matima** (South Africa)

# WOM PROJECTS

## Queens' and Princesses' Festival

- Training with Champions was a unique reward for Queens' Festival Top Finishers: the Top 10 players from each of the 6 qualification tournaments were invited to attend **two exclusive 45-minute online training sessions** with some of the strongest female players in the world: **GM Vaishali Rameshbabu** and **IM Alina Kashlinskaya**.
- This is not just a prize – it's a **rare chance to learn directly from champions**, ask questions, and gain insights that can spark long-term growth and motivation.
- WOM is committed to supporting the next generation of girls and women in chess. Through events like the **Queens' Online Chess Festival**, we want to give young players not just a platform to compete, but real tools for development – strong role models, meaningful prizes, and moments that can spark long-term growth.



# WOM PROJECTS

## Chess4all & All4Chess. The Women's Chess Marathon

- This August, the FIDE Commission for Women's Chess led the **Women's Chess Marathon** – a worldwide celebration held within FIDE Women's Month and the 2025 Social Chess Year.
- Each week, a different continent became the stage for tournaments, workshops, and conversations, always in close cooperation with local organizers.
- Over 1,000 participants joined the Marathon worldwide, showing just how needed these initiatives are. With the support of local organizers and our Commission members, events took place in:
  - **America:** Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Venezuela
  - **Africa:** South Africa and Zambia
  - **Asia & Oceania:** Nepal and Australia
  - **Europe:** Portugal and Italy

WOMEN'S CHESS  
**MONTH**  
AUGUST 2025

*Join the global*

**Women's Chess Marathon!**

**Celebrate, support, and empower**  
women and girls in chess.  
Organize an event, tag us, and be  
part of a **global celebration!**

Tag **@fidewomen**  
**#WomensChessMarathon**  
**#WomenInChess**

FIDE SOCIAL CHESS YEAR 25

# WOM PROJECTS

## The Women's Chess Marathon Week 1 Americas: Diversity and Community

**The Marathon began in the Americas**, where events highlighted how chess can build safe, supportive spaces for women and girls while celebrating the continent's diversity.

- ❖ An online Arbiter's Seminar opened the week, giving participants tools to strengthen their involvement in chess beyond the board. In **the Dominican Republic**, the Women's Tournament of Santiago formed part of the Chess for Girls in a Safe Environment initiative, emphasizing the importance of protection and opportunity for young players.
- ❖ In **Venezuela**, a Women's Chess Festival combined a rapid tournament with engaging talks and discussions. And in **Puerto Rico**, the regional closing event was hosted at the Casa del Ajedrez in Caguas. Its highlight was a simultaneous exhibition with the Women's Olympic Team – WIM Danitza Vázquez Maccarini, WCM Yanira Rivera Negrón, WCM Coralys M. Alvarado Pérez, WCM Gabriela Vera, joined by guest master WFM Rinelly Comas Colón – inspiring the next generation.

**Big appreciation goes to the Chess Confederation for the Americas and to our Commission members Sarai Sánchez and Francisco Cruz, whose support was invaluable.**



# WOM PROJECTS

## The Women's Chess Marathon

### Week 2 – Africa: Meeting Role Models, Building Confidence

The second week highlighted **Africa**, where chess became a platform for confidence, growth, and record-breaking participation in **South Africa and Zambia**. A special highlight of this week was the presence of **WGM Dana Reizniece, Deputy Chair of the FIDE Management Board**, who attended both events. Her encouragement left a strong impression on participants, many of whom were meeting a chess leader of her stature for the first time.

- ❖ In **South Africa**, the Queen's Chess Training Workshop gathered girls for skills development, with sessions by FT Eric Takawira, FI Reuben Salimu, and Nadzeya Krauchuk. Dana Reizniece opened the event with her lecture Making it in Chess and later led a simultaneous exhibition at Louwville High School. The week concluded with a Women's Month Blitz Tournament.
- ❖ Just days later in **Zambia**, history was made: the Rapid Women's Chess Championship brought together 88 female players, the largest number ever for a women's championship in the country. Here too, participants benefited from presence of Dana Reizniece, as she delivered a motivational talk that encouraged them to pursue their ambitions in chess and beyond.

**Special thank you to the Chess Federations of South Africa and Zambia for making these groundbreaking events possible.**



# WOM PROJECTS

## The Women's Chess Marathon

### Week 3 – Asia & Australia: Inspiration Across Generations

The third week of the Marathon showed how women's chess flourishes when communities rally behind it.

- ❖ In **Nepal**, the Himalayan Chess Academy staged one of the largest women's and girls' tournaments in the country's history, drawing 142 players aged between 5 and 67. The tournament also received extraordinary backing from across sports, culture, and education. Distinguished guests such as Palesha Goverdhan, bronze medalist at the Paris 2024 Paralympics, lent their support, underscoring how much potential girls and women in chess hold – and how vital it is to surround them with encouragement and recognition.
- ❖ Meanwhile in **Australia**, celebrations stretched across schools and generations. From the Korowa Anglican Girls School Zonal Tournament with 120 participants, to motivational talks by Angelica Zivanovic, and a lecture with simultaneous exhibition by WGM Julia Ryjanova, girls experienced both high-level chess and inspiring stories. The events also honoured Leonid Sandler, whose 25 years of coaching at Lauriston Girls School have left a remarkable legacy. Altogether, the Australian program blended large-scale participation with the impact of dedicated role models, creating a true celebration of women's chess.

**Special thanks go to Monalisha Khamboo and Leonid Sandler, whose dedication and long-term support continue to strengthen women's chess across the region.**



# WOM PROJECTS

## The Women's Chess Marathon

### Week 4 – Europe: The Power of Women's Voices

The Marathon concluded in **Europe** with events that emphasized the importance of women's voices in shaping the future of chess.

- ❖ In **Italy**, the conference Power Moves: Women Shaping Chess was hosted at Campus San Francesco in Conegliano. Speakers included Anastasia Sorokina, Chair of the FIDE Commission for Women's Chess, WGM Aleksandra Dimitrijević, IA Franca Dapiran, and Veronika Goi, moderated by Deborah Pavei. Their reflections touched on leadership, education, and inclusion in chess communities. Part of the celebration in Italy was a Girls & Boys Blitz Team Tournament, encouraging teamwork and friendly competition and teaching about inclusion in a fun way.
- ❖ In **Portugal**, the Women's Talks in Matosinhos followed the National Women's Semi-Rapid Championship, won by Marta Almeida. The panel featured Susana Gonçalves (WOM member and President of Chess2All), WIM Jussara Chaves, Ana Inês Silva, Isabel Nunes, Luísa Salgueiro (Mayor of Matosinhos), and André Vögtlin, Chair of the FIDE Social Commission.



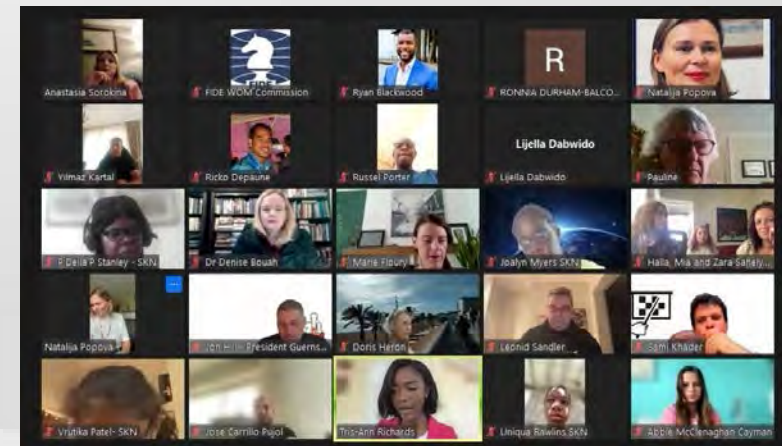
**Special thanks to the Italian Chess Federation, the Veneto Chess Committee, and Marco Biagioli, the Queen Club Mitropa FIDE Chess Academy and Susana Gonçalves and Portuguese Chess Federations and all local partners for making these meaningful events possible.**



# WOM PROJECTS

## Queen's Gambit Challenge 2025-2026

- The **Queen's Gambit Challenge** is an online initiative designed to empower female players and help national federations build competitive women's chess teams, led by FIDE WOM.
- Running from **April 2025 to April 2026**, this program will support federations with limited female participation in chess by providing a structured curriculum for players at **beginner to intermediate levels**.
- This program is a continuation of the **National Female Team Initiative**, which successfully introduced **eight new teams** to the **Chess Olympiad**. Participating helps strengthen the national federation's female chess presence, receive **expert coaching**, and join a **community of women** who are transforming the chess landscape.



# WOM PROJECTS

Chess for protection project. Girls Club in Kakuma



- One of FIDE's and FIDE WOM's flagship efforts is the Chess for Protection project, launched in collaboration with UNHCR to support refugee communities through structured chess education and opportunity.

**I am honored to become a leader of the whole Chess for Protection project since this year.**

- WOM is proud to contribute through its ongoing support for **the Girls Club in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya.**
- Thanks to a dedicated team of international coaches, the Girls Club continues to grow. **WGM Anastasia Karlovich and IM/WGM Salome Melia** lead regular online workshops and training sessions for the girls, while **FM Sergey Klimakovs** has provided in-person coaching in Kakuma and will return in November to continue preparing the students for over-the-board tournaments.



# WOM PROJECTS

## Girls Club in Kakuma



- The project is successfully continuing in 3 girls' schools (Angelina Jolie Primary School, Lifeworks Tumaini girls, Bhar-El-Naam Primary School), for 250 students attending online lessons with our wonderful lectures WGM Anastasiya Karlovich (UKR) and IM Salome Melia (GEO).
- **The 4<sup>th</sup> Big Hearts Foundation School will join the project in July 2025!**
- Lessons are held once a week in English, but this is not only about chess. The most important goal is a possibility for these girls to see, communicate and get support from inspiring role models.
- Activities of Girls Club Project include also meeting and communicating with successful women, reading and discussing books, painting workshops and many others.



# WOM PROJECTS

Chess for protection project.



- With June designated as **Refugee Awareness Month**, culminating in **World Refugee Day on June 20**, FIDE & WOM organized several activities to mark the occasion and highlight the inspiring impact of chess in Kakuma.
- **June 28<sup>th</sup>** - Motivational Talks and Friendly Matches for Girls' Club with Phylis Ngigi, Director of Gift of Chess and **June 29<sup>th</sup>** - Mass Chess Tournament for the Kakuma Community with assistance of Andrew Qwili, Vice-President of Chess Kenya.
- A special thanks goes to **DGT and Hans Pees**, whose generous **donation of 100 chess clocks** will be used during the training tournaments and regular training sessions. Likewise, **Gift of Chess** has made a significant contribution by **providing 100 chess boards**, ensuring that all participants have the equipment they need to learn, play, and grow.
- Access to professional materials is especially important as the Kakuma refugee team, which includes several Girls Club members, continues preparing for the 2026 Chess Olympiad.



# WOM PROJECTS

## ChessMom



The program provides **financial support to players with infants under two-year-old**, allowing them to travel **with a companion** who can care for the child during competition.

- Balancing the responsibilities of motherhood with a professional chess career is no easy task, and we acknowledge the dedication, strength, and perseverance of these remarkable players.
- In this spirit, FIDE is proud to announce the **return of the ChessMom** project for the 2026 Chess Olympiad in Uzbekistan.
- Following overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants during the 2024 Chess Olympiad in Hungary, the ChessMom project **will not only continue but expand**, ensuring that more players can pursue their chess ambitions without having to choose between career and motherhood.

# WOM PROJECTS

## Chess seminars for ladies in cooperation with FIDE Commissions

- The 175th **Internet Based FIDE Arbiters' Seminar** was held from **10th to 12th January 2025**. It was organized by the FIDE Commission for FIDE Commission for Women's Chess and Poland Chess Federation, under the auspices of FIDE.
- The Lecturer was **IA Nikolopoulos, Panagiotis** (GRE), FIDE Lecturer, and Local Assistant Lecturer was **IA Sokolski, Alexander** (POL).
- **22 Women National Arbiters from 19 Federations from all over the world participated in the Seminar** and 21 of them participated in the examination test, which was held after the end of the lectures, according to the Arbiters' Commission guidelines and covering all the topics of the seminar.



# WOM PROJECTS

## Chess seminars for ladies in cooperation with FIDE Commissions

- ❖ **18th online IA Seminar** held in **August 30th – September 7th 2025** by the WOM and FIDE Arbiters` Commission, under the auspices of FIDE. The Lecturers were IA Munoz Solis, Carolina (CRC), and IA Nikolopoulos, Panagiotis (GRE). The language of the Seminar was English. The Seminar provided norms and titles of International Arbiter, according to the Regulations for the titles of Arbiters. 25 participants, women only participated in the seminar, although we've received 48 applications already and will organize one more seminar like this in the end of this or beginning of the next year.
- ❖ **On October 11-12, 2025 FIDE IO seminar** has been organized as part of the World Youth Chess Championship 2025 in Durrës, Albania, the Albanian Chess Federation, in cooperation with FIDE WOM and under the auspices of the FIDE Events Commission (EVE). FIDE lecturer was Ozgur Solakoglu (TUR) – IO, IA, FT, FM, assistant lecturer was Anastasia Sorokina (AUS) – IO, IA, FPE, FT, WIM. 23 participants including 13 women from 15 countries took part in the seminar.



## IA Certification Seminar

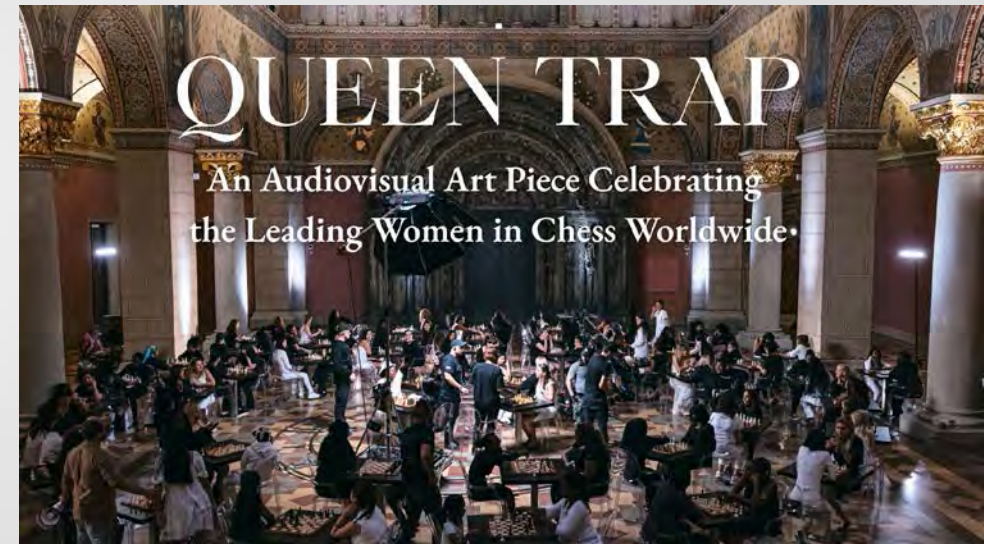
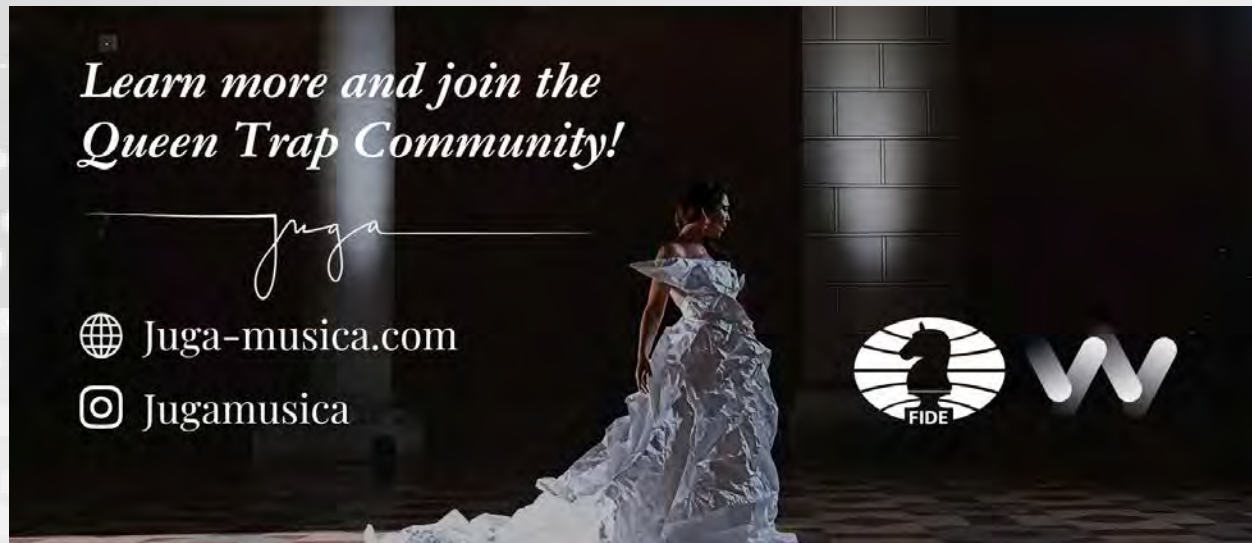
18

registration is opened  
women FA only

# WOM PROJECTS

## Chess Ladies Art Film Milestone

- Conceptualized by the chess artist Juga, this project showcases an all-female chess artistic performance from 160 countries, set to become a chess music video for Juga's upcoming song "Queen Trap." This event took place in an epic setting, a Budapest landmark, during the Olympiad 2024.



# WOM PROJECTS

## cooperation with Global Chess Festival

- ❖ The 11th Judit Polgar's Global Chess Festival was held with extraordinary interest this year at the Hungarian National Gallery. Each year, this international event seeks to present the diversity of chess, its cultural values, and its community-building power in a unique format and setting. One of this year's novelties was the RubikChess competition, where fifty young mixed pairs tested their skills. The unusual combination of the two games sparked great interest, and registrations quickly filled up.
- ❖ The event opened with the special presence of Judit Polgár and Ernő Rubik, offering participants the chance to meet two of Hungary's most iconic innovators.
- ❖ During the closing ceremony, the audience enjoyed a performance of Queen's Trap – an audiovisual project by Juga, created in cooperation with our Commission to celebrate women in chess.



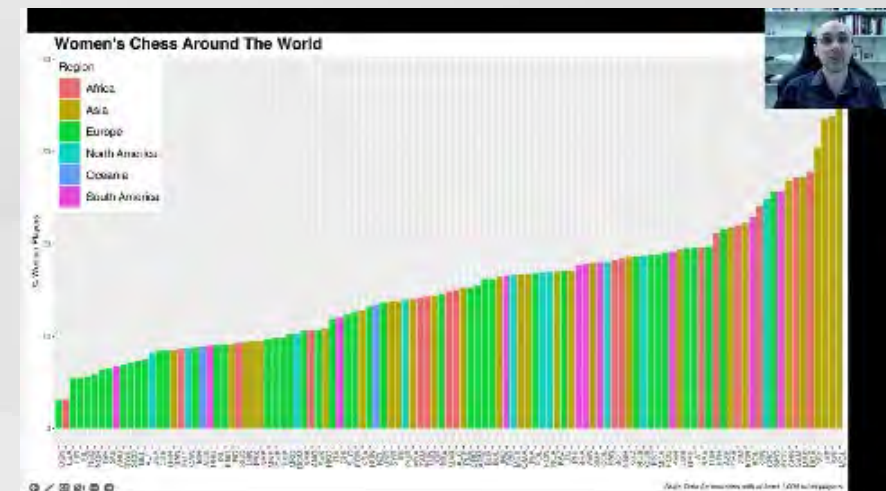
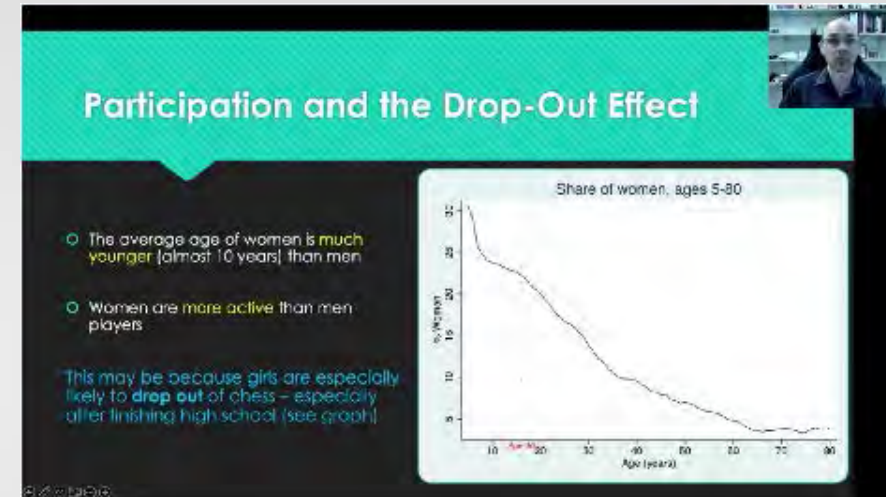
# WOM PROJECTS

## Global survey and women in chess index

➤ **Global survey and women in chess index.**  
Project launched by GM, PhD in economics,  
member of FIDE Commission for Women's Chess  
**David Smerdon.**

➤ The full report is published on the WOM  
website: [wom.fide.com/geci/](http://wom.fide.com/geci/)

**Big thank to the working groups and its  
leader for the active and devoted  
contribution in the projects.**



# A Grandmaster Park: David Smerdon Honoured in His Hometown

There's a brand-new reason for the chess world to smile – and it comes with swings, greenery, and a very special name.

We're thrilled to share that a park in Robertson, Australia, has officially been renamed **David Smerdon Park**, in honour of Grandmaster David Smerdon. This is no ordinary tribute – after all, it's not every day that a chess player gets a whole park named after them!



But what makes this park even more special to us is that **David is a long-standing and active member of the FIDE Commission for Women's Chess.**

During the 2024 Chess Olympiad in Budapest, he gave an eye-opening talk on gender equity in chess, drawing on both research and real-life insights.

**His contributions go far beyond the board.**

# WOM ACTIVITY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In our work we are going to pay a lot of attention to WOM popularization via social media.

Now WOM has **4 key tools for media development:**



[wom.fide.com](http://wom.fide.com)



[twitter.com/fidewomen](https://twitter.com/fidewomen)





[facebook.com/FIDEwomen](https://facebook.com/FIDEwomen)



[instagram.com/fidewomen](https://instagram.com/fidewomen)

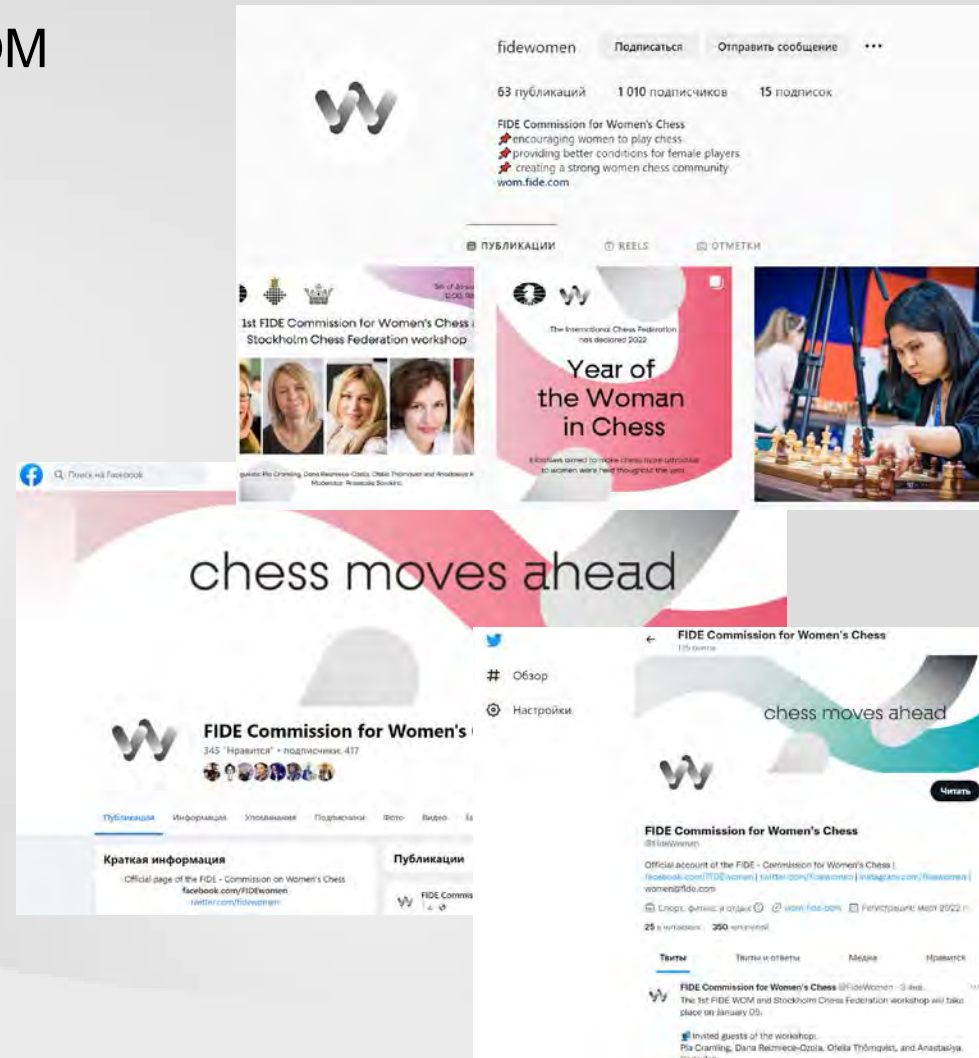
The results of active work are impressive audience gain:

 25%

 64%

 333%

**Special gratitude to Anna Kantane for every day support and managing WOM website and social media.**



# 2026 ROADMAP

We will continue our meaningful mission and expand the ongoing outstanding projects supporting women's community, safety and power worldwide.

**Queen's Gambit Challenge:** Start of period 3 for intermediates and potential team players. The next phase of the Queen's Gambit Challenge will support National Female Teams preparing for their first Olympiad and commence in March 2026.

**Chess for protection project. Girls Club in Kakuma.** Participation of the refugee team in the upcoming Olympiad 2026 in Uzbekistan.

**ChessMom 2025:** Application details for the next edition of ChessMom will be shared in the coming months. We encourage national teams to register for the 2026 Chess Olympiad.

**The Gender Equality in Chess Index (GECI):** WOM member David Smerdon will continue his work on GECI research - an innovative measure developed to evaluate and compare gender equality within the international chess community.

We will continue our main project **Chess4All** at last event for this year we are planning in Riga, Latvia in December.

**Seminars for women:** DGT Seminar is planned to be organized in cooperation with Stockholm chess federation and DGT during the Rilton Cup. Another seminar in cooperation with TRG commission is planned to be organized this year. Participation in all seminars is free for women.



## SINCEREST GRATITUDE

The achievements of the WOM are a testament to the dedication, collaboration, and hard work of every individual involved.

I extend my gratitude to the WOM Councilors - **Tris-Ann Richards, Judy Karigu Kiragu, Ken Koort, and Paris Klerides** and WOM Secretary **Shadi Paridar**, for their support and commitment. Special thanks go to **Gulmira Dauletova** for incredible contribution to women's chess and to our project leaders, **David Smerdon** for important research work implemented for women chess community, **Ulkar Umudova** for Queens Chess Festival and **Francisco J. Cruz Arce** for ChessMom project, as well as all commission members, whose tireless efforts have been instrumental in driving our initiatives forward.

I am also immensely grateful to **Yilmaz Kartal** for his exceptional technical support, ensuring the seamless execution of our events, **Anna Kantane** for every day managing WOM website and social media, **Yana Sidorchuk, Nadya Kravchuk and Maria Tamkovich** for their dedicated assistance during the FIDE WOM events.

Sincerest gratitude to **FIDE Arbiters' Commission, Trainers' Commission, Social Commission and Events Commission** for cooperation and support of women's chess. A heartfelt appreciation goes to our **FIDE WOM supervisor, Deputy Chair of FIDE Management Board – WGM Dana Rezniece**, whose mentorship, unwavering support, and daily engagement have been pivotal to the commission's success.

WOM contributions ensure to continue to make meaningful strides in promoting women's chess – truly making a difference for girls and women around the world through chess. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to **the FIDE President and FIDE Council and FIDE Management Board** for the extensive support of women's chess, for allocating resources on our initiatives.

# THANK YOU



**I wish all girls and women around the world to be safe  
and believe in themselves**



chess moves ahead