



# **Commission for Women's Chess Report**

## *Q4 of 2023*

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## Contents

Scope of the report	3
1.1. Introduction	3
1.2. Work principles	3
1.2.1. Internal Procedures	3
1.3. Organization	4
1.4. Internal Organizational Chart	5
1.5. Core projects 2023	6
1.5.1. Strategical partnerships	13
1.5.2. Follow-up activity	13
1.6. Meetings & Communications	14
1.7. Conclusion	15



## Scope of the report

This report represents a detailed presentation of the activity of the FIDE Commission for Women's Chess [WOM] in Q4 2023.

### 1.1. Introduction

FIDE Commission for Women's Chess (WOM) mission is making chess beloved and available for girls and ladies around the world. We devote 2023 to specifying the ways of involving more girls in chess, keeping professional players in sport and decreasing early career ending among female chess players.

Professional chess tournaments offer an excellent framework to study the existence of gender interaction but chess is a male-dominated game till now. There is a persistent and non-negligible performance gap between men and women. Women make up only 16% of FIDE master list, 11 % of FIDE classical rated players, only 2% of women are GMs. Performance gap is also impressive because out of 100 adults playing chess only 1 is female, out of 100 Juniors only 3 are the girls.

Although the situation is improving with time, but still very slowly. FIDE Commission for Women's Chess is aimed at shifting the focus to a clear goal of boosting female participation and reducing drop-out. We orientate on general promotion of chess for everybody instead of focusing on narrow field of professional chess.

### 1.2. Work principles

In order to be efficient and performant, a set of internal procedures and principles were settled.

#### 1.2.1. Internal Procedures

##### **General**

- Meritocracy and democracy are fundamental principles of WOM commission.
  - Meritocracy - each person's efforts will be presented and promoted through FIDE
  - Democracy - all important decisions will be decided by the majority of WOM commission.
- Active persons will have priority in choosing projects.



## 1.3. Organization

### Organization

- WOM commission is organized in workgroups. Six workgroups are defined inside the commission, which will be described in the 1.3. Section.
- There are 6 workgroups:
  - Chess4all & All4Chess
  - Global survey + women in chess index
  - ChessMom
  - Creating female national teams
  - Queens' Festival 2023
  - Chess seminars for women and online/hybrid seminars for professionals
- Each workgroup has a responsible, called head of workgroup.
- Every workgroup has objectives, projects, procedures.
- The head of workgroup will have the following responsibilities:
  - Organizing and calling the meetings
  - Being in charge with delegation inside the workgroup
  - If a head of workgroup is not available, then he will assign the responsibility to another person.



## 1.4. Internal Organizational Chart

WOM commission has 23 members, including chairman, secretary, councilors and members.

No.	Position	Surname	Name	Federation
1	Chairperson	Sorokina	Anastasia	Australia
2	Secretary	Paridar	Shadi	Iran
3	Councillor	Kiragu	Judy Karigu	Kenya
4	Councillor	Koort	Ken	Estonia
5	Councillor	Richards	TrisAnn	Saint Lucia
6	Councillor	Klerides	Paris	Cyprus
7	Member	Magne Kouokam	Sylviane	Cameroon
8	Member	Sanchez Castillo	Sarai Carolina	Venezuela
9	Member	Dauletova	Gulmira	Kazakhstan
10	Member	Yildiz Kadioglu	Betul Cemre	Turkey
11	Member	Esse	Akua Kosife	Togo
12	Member	Cruz Arce	Francisco J.	Puerto Rico
13	Member	Smerdon	David	Australia
14	Member	Skog	Benedicte Westre	Norway
15	Member	Ju	Wenjun	China
16	Member	Apol	Katrin Didriksen	Faroe Islands
17	Member	Goncalves	Susana	Portugal
18	Member	Umudova	Ulkar	Azerbaijan
19	Member	Rodrigo Yanguas	Maria	Spain
20	Member	Chen	Mei Fang Dina	Chinese Taipei
21	Member	Khamboo	Monalisha	Nepal
22	Member	Rich	Tony	USA
23	Member	Meyer	Carol B	USA

No.	Workgroup	Head of workgroup
1	Chess4all & All4Chess	Sorokina Anastasia
2	Global survey + women in chess index	Smerdon David
3	ChessMom	Cruz Arce Francisco J.
4	Creating female national teams in federations without ones	Richards TrisAnn
5	Updating rules of Queens' Festival 2023	Umudova Ulkar
6	Chess seminars for women and online/hybrid seminars for professionals	Paridar Shadi



## 1.5. Core projects 2023

It is very important to mention that WOM core projects are based on the impressive and working experience of 2022 YOWIC, which we are honored to update and increase where it is necessary. In 2023 WOM also launched partnership with ECU Commission for Women's Chess and planning prosperous further cooperation.

Main practical instrument of WOM to achieve the abovementioned goals is implemented and planned projects, organized in cooperation with national chess federations and FIDE Commissions.

During preparing this report WOM has been actively engaged on the following projects:

- **Chess4all & All4Chess**. The idea of this project is to involve as much girls and ladies as possible around the world to be interested in chess, to play chess, to get new profession via chess. Project consists of 2 stages:

**Chess4all** - series of the monthly workshops and chess activities in different continents, countries with famous chess players and female chess role models to explain that chess is not only professional sport, but adventure, hobby or even potential profession (chess instructor in school, chess arbiter, chess organizer, chess journalist, streamer, painter, politician etc.) Chess has no limits, chess is equal, chess is safe and tolerant. Chess can open a lot of possibilities in life, in profession, in business (chess school, chess magazine, chess shop etc.).

**All4Chess** – chess events with famous non-chess people, who like chess: chess fans vs professional female chess players – planning for 2024.

Examples of successfully held Chess4all project:

- 1) 17 December 2022 Katowice, Poland - "Gwiazdka szachowa" - the 1st Chess4all & All4Chess event in cooperation with European Chess Union Commission for Women's Chess & Organizing Committee of the European Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship 2022.

<https://wom.fide.com/all-for-chess-chess-for-all-wom-event-gwiazdka-szachowa/>





2) 5 January 2023 Stockholm, Sweden in cooperation with the Stockholm Chess Federation

<https://wom.fide.com/women-in-chess-fide-wom-workshop-held-in-stockholm/>



3) 6 February 2023 Abu Dhabi, UAE in cooperation with UAE Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence and the Asian Chess Federation

<https://wom.fide.com/tolerance-games-asian-chess-womens-contest-run-big-in-abu-dhabi/>



4) 9 March 2023 Tirana, Albania in cooperation with Balkan Chess Federation, Albanian Chess Federation, Albanian Center for Openness and Dialogue

<https://wom.fide.com/international-womens-day-chess-festival-held-in-tirana-albania/>





5) 21 March – 8 April 2023 Singapore, New Zealand and Australia. The initiative will include workshop “Chess is an Equal Game”, simuls with GMs, chess tournaments, lectures, presentation of FIDE social projects.

<https://wom.fide.com/celebrating-women-in-chess-next-stop-oceania/>



6) 14 May 2023 Toronto, Canada. Toronto Chess Festival for Women & Girls was organized by The Hart House Chess Club, supported by the Canadian Chess Federation, Ontario Chess Association, and the FIDE Commission for Women’s Chess.

<https://wom.fide.com/all4chess-chess4all-toronto-chess-festival-for-women-girls/>



7) 26-27 June Tallinn, Estonia. A new Baltic and Ukraine edition was organized in cooperation with Estonian Chess Federation and took place in a historical building – Paul Keres Chess House.

<https://wom.fide.com/chess4all-all4chess-this-time-for-baltics-and-ukraine/>







8) 03 August Baku, Azerbaijan. «Little Stars» tournament invited 50 boys and 50 girls born in year 2013 and younger took part in the Swiss system 7-rounds tournament. The number of players was dedicated to the 100 anniversaries of the national leader of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev and the upcoming 100 anniversary of FIDE.

<https://wom.fide.com/all4chess-chess4all-wom-event-little-stars-set-for-august-02-in-baku/>



It is worthy of note that all Chess4all & All4Chess events are only co-financed by FIDE, the major part of the budget is covered by local organizers/partners.

- **Chess seminars for ladies.** Educational event organized similar as arbiters' seminar, organizers' seminar, chess trainers'/instructors' seminar with **the main goal to provide an opportunity for women to gain additional knowledge and skills through lectures, discussion, and other interactive activities.** Free for the participants.

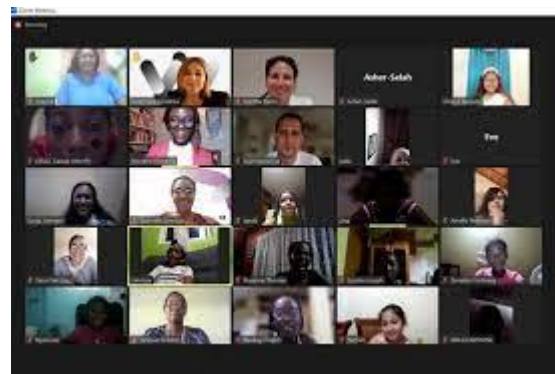
Examples of successfully held chess seminars:

- 1) 10-12 March 2023 Online format. The ladies-only arbiters' seminar held by IA Panagiotis Nikolopoulos, IA Mihail Prevenios, and IA Tshepiso Lopang. The Seminar gave norms and titles of FIDE Arbiter to the national arbiters nominated by their federations.
- 2) 17-19 March 2023 Online format. The Online FIDE Trainers' Seminar for female trainers organized by the FIDE TRG Commission in cooperation with WOM. 20 women nominated by WOM participated in the ladies' seminar.
- 3) 04-07 October 2023, Durres, Albania. FIDE Fair Play Seminar was led by FIDE FPL lecturers: Bojana Bejatovic – FPL Secretary, Alex Colovic – FP Lecturer, Jürgen Klüners – FPL Member who expertly navigated various topics, including event preparations, interactions with tournament officials and spectators, crowd management, cheating prevention and detection, observations, body language, psychological aspects, and unusual behaviors. The FIDE Commission for Women's Chess covered 10 spots for 10 female participants (seminar + exam) on a first-come, first-served basis. All seminar participants received certificates of participations.

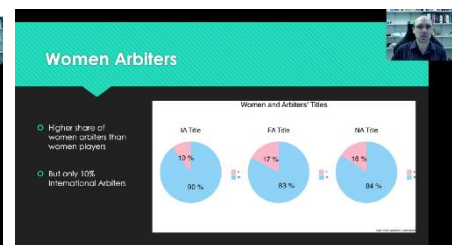
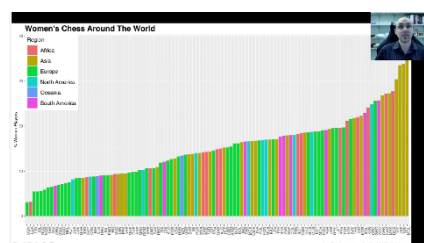
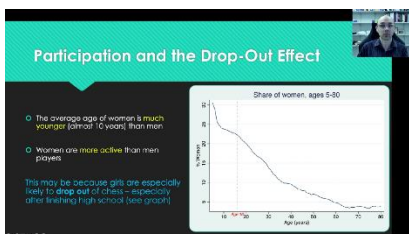


- **Queen's Gambit Challenge.** A chess crash course for females interested in learning how to play chess started on 8 March 2023. **It is aimed at equipping participants with foundational knowledge on how to play the game and how to participate in a chess tournament.** Which in turn will help to increase the number of female chess players throughout the Caribbean with an expected participation of over 500 females from 15 different countries. Project manager – TrisAnn Richards (Saint Lucia).

<https://wom.fide.com/370-women-and-girls-participated-in-the-queens-gambit-challenge/>



- **Global survey and women in chess index.** The main goal to track and inspire progress towards gender equality in the world of chess. Project launched by GM, PhD in economics, member of FIDE Commission for Women's Chess David Smerdon.



- **During FIDE Council the FIDE Commission for Women's Chess in cooperation with the Mexican Chess Federation organized series of side events:**

1) Master classes with female role models: FIDE Deputy Chair Dana Reizniece-Ozola, Director of ChessKid Español, FIDE WIM, chess commentator and streamer Ivette Garcia.



2) FIDE Mexican Girls&Families tournament on 6 April, 2023 in Mexico City, Mexico

<https://wom.fide.com/team-tournament-for-girls-and-their-families-held-in-mexico/>



- **Queens' Online Chess Festival.** The main goal of the event is to promote women's chess and to give an opportunity to all women who love chess or play chess feel involved in big chess world. Over 800 female players from 124 countries participated in the third edition of the Queens' Online Chess Festival, a series of continental women's online blitz tournaments that took place from July 2-16 2023 organized as side event of the WWCM 2023. This Festival is planned to become annual event devoted to the International Women's Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March. The winners of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition will be invited to the 45th World Chess Olympiad 2024 in Budapest, Hungary.





- **Girls Chess Club in Kakuma (Chess for protection project).** The project was launched in August 2021 in cooperation with FIDE Social Commission **with the main goals: to learn what is chess and how to play chess, improve personal chess skills and creative development.** First classes were held in Angelina Jolie Primary School in Kakuma with an attendance of 40 students. In 2023 it runs in three girls' boarding schools in the region – Angelina Jolie Primary School, Morneau Shepell Secondary School and Bhar-El-Naam Primary School – with 250 refugee schoolgirls attending chess classes twice a week. The program's second edition is running from March 2023 till the end of July. Female students attend online lessons by WGM Anastasiya Karlovich (UKR) and IM Salome Melia (GEO). They also study and play chess with a local tutor. In July 2023, the Girls Club students participated in the Queens' Online Chess Festival, a series of continental women's online blitz tournaments organized by WOM.



- **Chess4Peace. Refugee women training programme.** The main idea of the pilot project is to equip female refugees 18 – 23 years old with additional knowledge about diverse chess specialties and professions. The pilot project supported by International Olympic Committee is planned to be held on 9-13 November 2023 for 8 Ukrainian women currently based in Ukraine and Poland, two of them live in Warsaw now. If the initiative is successful, the project's targeted audience will be increased for the women refugees worldwide. The project is held in cooperation with FIDE Chess Federations, local NGOs, state organizations, UNHCR. Refugee Woman Chess training programme is considered to be presented in a form of a one-week offline camp for female refugees based in Warsaw, Poland. Followed by monthly chess session with a professional chess trainer.
- **Women Safeguarding Policy.** Main goal is in promoting a safe and respectful environment within the chess community, to providing resources, support, and a safe reporting mechanism for anyone who has experienced or witnessed sexual harassment in chess-related activities. WOM totally supports the devising the Women Safeguarding



Policy document and on behalf of the Commission we'll nominate the delegates to cooperate with the FIDE team in cooperation with an external expertise from experienced partners like Safe Sports. This cooperation might help to improve the document and increase the credibility of the planned process. I personally consider that withing the current environment we need to devise such a strategy urgently and I suggest that we not only support but also actively concluded to the process.

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

Now FIDE WOM has 4 key tools for media development:

- Official web-site: [wom.fide.com](http://wom.fide.com)
- Official Twitter account: [twitter.com/fidewomen](https://twitter.com/fidewomen)
- Official Facebook account: [facebook.com/FIDEwomen](https://facebook.com/FIDEwomen)
- Official Instagram account: [instagram.com/fidewomen](https://instagram.com/fidewomen)

The impressive result of active work in 2023 is remarkable audience gain since January 2023:

Twitter **+84,6%**, Facebook **+156,6%**, Instagram **+213,4%**

### 1.5.1. Strategical partnerships

WOM is truly grateful to the strategical partners for prosperous cooperation in our mission of forming gender equity policies, practices and programs. Creating a strong women chess community is very important for us to continue pursuing our goals and representing the interests of women in chess. In recent years, we have achieved a number of long-lasting strategic goals, from encouraging women to actively participate in all aspects of chess life by offering them free educational seminars to implementing gender quotas for various official positions and assignments.

Special gratitude to the International Olympic Committee, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), FIDE Commissions: Social Commission, Trainers' Commission, Chess in Education Commission and Arbiters Commission and FIDE national federations for support and contribution in women's chess expand and development.

### 1.5.2. Follow-up activity

The WOM plans to continue active work on the developing of the following projects:

**Chess4all & All4Chess.** The upcoming Chess4all event is planned on 15 January 2024 African continent in cooperation with Botswana and Nigeria Chess Federations.

**Queen's Gambit Challenge.** A chess crash course for females interested in learning how to play chess. It is aimed at equipping participants with foundational knowledge on how to play the



game and how to participate in a chess tournament. Which in turn will help to increase the number of female chess players throughout the Caribbean with an expected participation of over 500 females from 15 different countries. Project manager – TrisAnn Richards (Saint Lucia).

**Chess seminars for ladies** - educational event organized similar as arbiters' seminar, organizers' seminar, chess trainers'/instructors' seminar. Free for the participants.

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

**Online/hybrid seminar and workshops for professional chess players.** Experience exchange event with main goal to share ideas, wishes and concerns of professionals, listen to their advice about what should be improved in women chess.

**ChessMom (Pilot project for Chess Olympiad 2024).** Task for 2023 is to start the preparation activities. The idea of the project is to keep professional chess players in the chess life after baby is born. Many chess players can't come to the Olympiad and other chess events because there is no possibility for them to take care about baby.

WOM proposes to FIDE to cover an extra place in the hotel if a lady brings member of the family or a babysitter to look after the baby during the Olympiad. It will be not a huge expense but can become a great social initiative. Project manager – Francisco J. Cruz Arce (Puerto Rico)

**Chess4Peace. Refugee women training programme.** The main idea of the pilot project is to equip female refugees 18 – 23 years old with additional knowledge about diverse chess specialties and professions. The project is held in cooperation with FIDE Chess Federations, local NGOs, state organizations, UNHCR. Refugee Woman Chess training programme is considered to be presented in a form of a one-week offline camp for female refugees based in Warsaw, Poland. Followed by monthly chess session with a professional chess trainer.

**Queens' Chess Festival 2024.** Making annual a series of continental and global women's online chess tournaments and educative side dedicated to the International Women's Day. Project manager - Ulkar Umudova (Azerbaijan).

**Creating female national teams in federations without ones.** Project manager – Richards TrisAnn (Saint Lucia)

## 1.6. Meetings & Communications

In order to be effective, we conducted online meetings and discussed via email and WhatsApp.



- With FIDE representatives
  - The chairperson and councilors had numerous meetings and emails with FIDE members.
- Internal
  - In order to decide the head of workgroups, the chairman did the following:
    - Open an expression of interest, which consisted in a Google Form
    - Conducted meetings with the people interested in
  - Workgroups have several internal meetings.
- Third Parties
  - Meetings with all the partners that had involved in projects organized by WOM.
  - Meetings with other third parties which were interested in gathering more information regarding WOM projects.
  - Communication took place via email or WhatsApp and during personal meetings.

## 1.7. Conclusion

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the FIDE President and FIDE Council for the extensive support of women's chess, for allocating resources on our initiatives. My special personal gratitude to FIDE Deputy Chair, Dana Reizniece-Ozola who has contributed an incredible amount of her time, energy and support to women's chess in FIDE.

I thank all my colleagues in FIDE Commission for Women's Chess and my colleagues from Trainers' Commission, Social Commissions, Arbiters' Commission and Fair Play Commission with whom we have already launched our cooperation and I hope our work will attract more girls and women join and stay in the amazing chess community.

Additional gratitude to Solakoglu Ozgur for his active involvement in Queen's festival organization and consulting assistance, Tania Karali for professional job as chief arbiter of Queen's Festival and Kartal Yilmaz for coordinating all WOM online seminars and other online activities.

In the beginning of 2023 FIDE management in cooperation with WOM presented Certificates of appreciation to all women involved in FIDE WOM activities, whose hard every day work is always behind the scenes, who encourage more women to play chess and create a strong women chess community. In this report I would like to express personal gratitude to Lukasz Turlej, Nebojsa Baralic and Kermen Goryaeva for their personal involvement and effort in all technical and delivering processes for this awarding.



WOM will proceed our prosperous cooperation with EDU, TRG and SOC FIDE Commissions to organize educational seminars and joined projects. We hope to organize Award Ceremony 2024 to continue great last year experience of acknowledgment of women's achievements in chess life.