



**ANNUAL REPORT  
2020**

## Preface

Since I am writing this report in 2021 and a military coup has just taken place on February 1st, I will not dawdle on other matters. I am writing this on March 7<sup>th</sup>, so it has been one month since the whole country has been turned upside down. There is a growing civil disobedience movement. All over the country people are protesting every day, and many organizations have been formed to support the people who protest on the streets. Over fifty people have died already by the hands of the military. All the people are standing up and are asking all the civil servants to join the fight. There are many individuals, communities and small organisations and bigger organizations who organize charity among the protesters. Money is being given to the civil servants who are now out of a job and are joining the protests. Food and water are handed out among the protesters; phonecards and refills are being distributed; and people are cleaning up after the protests. At night there are civilian guards protecting the neighbourhood from thugs who are sent by the military to create violence and chaos among the citizens. There is a call for international support which is only being given by a few countries. The UN has still not taken a clear stance and ASEAN is also holding back from their responsibilities.

As we have assisted many women over the past twelve years, we are devastated and frustrated by the lack of support of the international community. As We women, we lobby at the Dutch government and push them to also lobby the EU and the UN. Furthermore, we are fundraising and raising awareness. The funds are mainly used towards the assistance of civil servants and to support women in our network with their needs (food, transportation, phone refills). We all sincerely hope that the coup will end and that a more ethnic diverse governing system will come into place. As our ethnic women are not only fighting to get rid of the military but also to gain equal rights for all ethnic people in the country. The women whom we supported do not want to go back to living in a totalitarian state and now they must fight very hard to ensure that this will not happen. They are angry, sad and they feel unsafe, but they will not stop fighting. They want their children to grow up in a democratic county where they are free of fear. There is much to do, and we hope that your support in these circumstances will continue and even intensify when it is needed. We already knew that educating women is very important and now we know even more that it is> They are standing up now and showing what their leadership is worth. If they did not have that opportunity, they would not have been able to fight actively on the frontlines, which now they can. We have to ensure that these women and the younger upcoming leaders continue to be supported, so that they can feel their strengths and understand their skills and use them to transform Myanmar into a country where there is dialogue about equal rights for all!

## **Refugee and Migrant women contextual background**

“An unprecedented 68.5 million people around the world have been forced from home. Among them are nearly 25.4 million refugees. Nearly 1 person is forcibly displaced every two seconds as a result of conflict or persecution.”[1]

Refugee and migrant women are underrepresented on every level, which makes it harder for them to voice their concerns and needs. They have little access to education and continuously deal with gender related cultural stereotypes. Generally, there is a lack of funding for programs targeting these issues.

“Training in leadership skills, advocacy, human rights law, formal meeting procedure and public speaking is needed to enhance their participation. Without this support, the participation of women and girls in decision making processes can be tokenistic if they are not able to participate effectively. Most importantly, the pendulum swing to focus on the strengths and abilities of refugee women and girls without recognizing the barriers that create minority status and vulnerability is equally dangerous.”[2]

In the Netherlands, research has shown that one of the explanatory factors for lower rates of refugees in the labour market is the long-term exclusion of their participation in society. This is due to the waiting period they have to go through until their status is finalized or until they have mastered the Dutch language. This exclusion has negative consequences for both the refugees and society at large. The lower rate of refugees’ participation in the labour market can cause loneliness, depression and other mental health problems.

There is a need for strengthening refugee women’s position through education and leadership programs to ensure their participation in the labour market. Many women do not want to wait and be excluded from Dutch society, instead they want to use their talents and skills so they can play a vital role in integrating other refugees and help solve issues that involve their communities on a larger scale.

## **Organisation**

We women International supported We women Myanmar through expertise sharing, management coaching, coaching of people training to be coaches, student coaching and funding.

We women International is a 100% run by volunteers.

Volunteers around the world assist We women in their goal in 2020, ten volunteers provided their knowledge and time to contribute to our cause.

Board: Ursula Cats, Hayley Rose, Caroline Seagle and Maartje Meens

We women Myanmar has no paid staff members and is also run by volunteers:  
Fifteen volunteers assist the director, Num Aye, with the projects and fundraising.

## **Program the Netherlands**

Two women from Syria have participated in the Inner Leadership Coaching.

### **Explanation of The Inner Leadership Coaching**

The aims of the inner Leadership Coaching are:

Transforming trauma into power

Leadership skill development

**Knowing their personal stories, getting insight into traumatic events and becoming aware of their role as women makes it possible to strengthen transformation processes, assisting the women into becoming self-confident emerging leaders.**

In 2010 We women began assisting minority refugee women from Myanmar who wanted to attend university. The first thing that became apparent was that many women did not have insight into their own skills, strengths and weaknesses and often had a very low self-esteem. Based on these observations, the development of the Leadership Coaching started, which identifies and explores the skills, strengths, past experiences and available knowledge of the women. And at the same time seeking to find what resources they were exposed to. Secondly the coaching was addressing their personal background stories and present situation. Most women had experienced traumatic life events and had to help their families with their daily life survival. All the women in our projects had created a little space for themselves, where they really wanted to grow their skills. However their space was small and they had only little time to act within that space. Therefore it was important to get insight into their daily life struggles, as this helped to define a realistic future plan in line with the available space they had. A third crucial issue that arose was their cultural prescribed roles as women and specific obstacles that came with this. This played a big role in their process towards leadership. Gaining an understanding into their own contextual background as a woman made them aware of their position and how they could transform this for themselves and other women.

Research in Myanmar, Thailand and the Netherlands has shown us that many refugee and migrant women around the world have fled traumatic situations and carry huge responsibilities. Inner leadership coaching has been highly valued by the women whom we interviewed. Especially as most women have no access to resources to build their inner leadership capacities and many faced traumatic life experiences and all have faced cultural difficulties through gender inequality. Gender inequality can lead to a low self-esteem and less self-confidence. This in turn will slow down, discourage, stop or even turn down personal development and inner strengths development. To believe in oneself and to feed inner strengths is necessary to grow into leadership positions

### **The end results of the inner leadership coaching**

The women have gained self-confidence and can work from their strengths

The women have created a realistic future plan and can actively take part in society

The women are role models in their communities

The women contribute towards social change in their communities

While one woman is still taking part in the coaching, another one has finished the trajectory and she is now setting up her own coaching project for refugee women from Syria. The project is set up with the assistance of We women and supervised by Ursula.

## Program Myanmar

Since there has been limited funding, only volunteers still work at We women Myanmar and the projects have been minimised. The monthly Women Leadership Network Meetings in Yangon or online due to the COVID measurements are still taking place. The WLN meetings are still being attended by many women every month, between 10 to 20 women, if at the office maximum 15 and online there is a bigger crowd.

### The Women Leadership Network explained:

The Women Leadership Network (WLN) connects women from different backgrounds and provides them with a platform to engage in local, regional and national dialogue about the challenges Myanmar faces in today's world. More importantly, women utilise their combined knowledge and experience to propose creative solutions and identify actions that they can take to address the underlying causes to these problems. Building bridges, the network brings together women from all ethnicities and religions with backgrounds in academia, business and civil society. Therefore, the Women Leadership Network is **an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural action network** aimed at driving social change and advancing women's peace and security.

The network operates in local chapters in different cities, states and divisions in Myanmar. Using a grassroots approach, the networks are run by local women who are familiar with the local context. Based on the specific needs of the community, each network decides its own focus. Examples of topics the Women Leadership Network focuses on are domestic violence, women's involvement in the peace process, freedom of expression, religious and cultural tensions or the role of men in gender emancipation.

Hence, we believe that leadership coaching is necessary to believe in oneself and to feed inner strengths. We women Inner leadership & Career Coaching: Transforming trauma into power The coaching gives an insight into traumas and subconscious patterns and transforms these into personal strengths. It also examines life experiences, future dreams and career aims. The inner leadership & career coaching is given to emerging women leaders who are committed towards bringing social change and transformation.

These were the topics of the WLN meetings of 2020:

- Women & Stress
- Law Protecting Women
- Soap Making
- Challenges of Women in Leadership Roles: how to Solve Potential Problems
- Gender based violence

The weekly English classes, one basic class and one intermediate class are still taking place online, the teachers are international and from Myanmar. About 6 - 8 students regularly attend each class.

The volunteers of the foundation have been raising online awareness by posting three informative posts a week, which are followed and shared by the women in our network.

## Financial overview 2020

### Revenues and expenditures (in Euros)

	2020	2019
<b><i>Revenue sources</i></b>		
Donations monthly private donors	4,065	5,430
Donations fundraising campaigns & events	1,286	7,867
Donations from foundations	0	0
Volunteers renting rooms	0	159
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>5,351</b>	<b>13,456</b>
<b><i>Expenditures</i></b>		
Program costs Myanmar	4,540	13,450
Outsourced fundraising	78	1,749
Telephone & website hosting	602	240
Banking charges	301	301
Other	0	0
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>5,521</b>	<b>15,740</b>
<b><u>Result</u></b>	<b><u>-170</u></b>	<b><u>-2,284</u></b>

## Balance (in Euros)

	<b>31-12-2020</b>	<b>31-12-2019</b>	<b>31-12-2018</b>
<b>Assets</b>			
Bank balance	410	555	2,166
Paypal balance	109	232	905
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>3,071</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Allocated reserves	0	0	0
Continuity reserve	519	787	3,071
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>3,071</b>

### Explanatory notes

In 2020, revenue from fundraising had decreased in comparison to the years before, as there had been little to no activities regarding fundraising.

With the donations from private donors (structural and incidental) We women MMR managed to run the main program (Women Leadership Network) and cover the costs.

The Director NL has started a program in The Netherlands on a voluntary basis. Her costs for communication tools necessary for this program have been covered.



## Budget 2021 - 2024

### We women Myanmar

With the current political situation in Myanmar, it is unclear if We women Myanmar will be able to remain operational in the future. However, it was decided to keep two line items intact in the budget for 2021-2024. It's our goal to recruit enough monthly donors to be able to support We women Myanmar with these minimal needs.

Additionally, we will start a fundraising campaign to support protesters with survival money. More information on this will be made available in April 2021.

<b>Budget Myanmar</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Rent Yangon office - 300 per mth	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600
WLN Yangon - 100 per mth	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>4,800</b>

### We women International

We women International will be focusing on the implementation of leadership coaching for refugee women in the Netherlands. For more information on this process, we refer you to the project proposal of this project.

<b>Budget 2020 International</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Leadership coaching (2,500 per coachee)	5,000	10,000	15,000	15,000
Telephone & web hosting - 35 per mth	450	450	450	450
Banking charges - 25 per mth	300	300	300	300
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,750</b>	<b>10,750</b>	<b>15,750</b>	<b>15,750</b>

## **Thanks for your support**

Dear brave women in Myanmar, we want to thank you for courage, your strength, your light and your perseverance. You are amazing women who are role models for us all.

Dear volunteers you have been working so hard to keep We women's projects running and a special thank you needs to go to Num Aye, who through all these difficult times is standing tall as a leader and continues to encourage many women, who all grow in the light that she gives them. We appreciate all the efforts of the volunteers in Yangon, who continue to support the foundation!

Dear friends, all of you who support us in various ways, we are nothing without you, as we need all the support that we can get and you are always there to help whenever we need you the most!

A big hug from the We women team!