

EARTH COMPANY

Wai Wai Nu



**IMPACT HERO 2019**

**WAI WAI NU**

Final Report

IMPACT HERO 2019

# WAI WAI NU

Founder, Women's Peace Network

Human Rights Activist

Wai Wai, is a human rights activist, with Rohingya ethnicity. Through her NGO, Women's Peace Network, **she advocates for and educates the next generation leaders to build inclusive futures in Myanmar.** Her institution promotes inclusion, trust, and peace through the following main initiatives:

- **Human Rights Advocacy**
- **Youth Development**
- **Peace Building**
- **Refugee Support in Bangladesh**

# Founder's Message



## What a 5 years it has been.

I first heard Wai Wai speak back in 2017, and without second thoughts, I reached out to her and encouraged her to apply for our Impact Hero award. Alas, with the Rohingya genocide turning one million people into refugees that year, she was unable to apply.

Wai Wai eventually became our Impact Hero in 2019. **Our support for her primarily focused on ensuring the sustainability of her organization's activities.** By delivering educational programs to youths of diverse ethnic backgrounds, she aimed to bring forth inclusive futures in Myanmar.

Sadly, those attempts turned to despair in 2021.

After the military coup began in February, citizens of Myanmar were stripped of their rights and freedom. The situation was dire, but they did not succumb to it - especially Wai Wai!

She used every ounce of her ability to raise her voice, to represent in the international arena those of millions in her country. **Following the coup, we moved quickly to shift our support to funding her advocacy work.**

Advocacy work is hard. Results could only show after decades of work, and even then, the work still might not receive the recognition it deserves. Not many pays them to be activists.

In private life, Wai Wai is just like every other girl who loves manicures. But when it comes to advocacy, she is a fierce warrior, with so much guts and tenacity but also with elegance and intelligence to logically navigate through sensitive political matters.

It was our proud privilege to have been able to support such a brilliant changemaker, to deliver with you the necessary support at the right time, and to slowly witness change happening overtime. There is still a long way to go. So please do continue to follow and support Wai Wai's journey.

With love, respect and gratitude,  
**Aska Hamakawa, CEO, Earth Company**





# Earth Company's Support over Three Years

**119,102 USD**

**from**

**445 donors**

**used to support:**

**1. Operating expenses to mobilize youth development programs**

**45,940  
USD**

**2. Advocacy activities during the military coup in Myanmar**

**60,050  
USD**

**3. Support for the establishment of a new organization**

**5,568  
USD**

## **1. Operational expenses to mobilize youth development programs**

The Yangon Youth Leadership Center or YYLC, is the youth development arm of the Women's Peace Network. YYLC gathers women and young people from diverse backgrounds to learn, share, and explore their ideas and promote leadership in social, political, and peace-building.

As YYLC faced financial difficulties, Earth Company launched a crowdfunding campaign in June 2019, for which **96 people** donated, and a total of **46K USD went to support YYLC operations.**

Although YYLC was forced to cease its activities after the coup, their alumni are still leading the democracy movement, including activists who are now in leadership positions in the National Unity Government of Myanmar (NUG).

From the donations, **approximately 7,500 USD was incurred by Earth Company as the support's operating expenses.**



## 2. Advocacy activities during the military coup in Myanmar

Immediately after the military coup broke out in February 2021, from March to April, we conducted a **crowdfunding campaign to support Wai Wai's advocacy work**. We were able to secure **donations of 32K USD from 317 donors**. Combined with corporate donations, **the final donation totaled 60K USD**.

This enabled Wai Wai to continue her advocacy work to the UN and other international organizations as well as foreign dignitaries around the world while urging International Community to act through major global media outlets.

Simultaneously, Wai Wai supported the democracy movement from outside the country by providing advice and support through social networking services to young people participating in the peaceful protests in Myanmar.

## 3. Establishment of a new organization

In 2012, Wai Wai established the Women's Peace Network which has mainly been operating through overseas grants. But when she moved to the U.S – for security reasons – she was no longer eligible for grants, and raising funds to sustain activities became a major challenge.

In light of this situation, **we supported the organization's preparations to register as a non-profit organization in the U.S**, which will expand its fundraising possibilities in the region where she is now based and has an extensive network. In July 2020, we held an online bootcamp to verbalize the organization's vision and mission and organize the positioning of its projects. Additionally, we also **facilitated consultations to help her new organizations establish its brand identity**.

# Impact Hero 2019: Our Journey Together

## Bali Kick-off Meeting



January 2019

June 2019

## Press Conference at the Japan Press Club



Held a press conference during her visit to Japan on the issues surrounding Rohingya refugees at the Japan Press Club. The article was later published in several media.

October 2019

December 2019

## Marketing Support



Bootcamp to discuss mission and vision for the new U.S. organization and to provide branding support.

February 2020

## Emergency Fundraising for Advocacy Work for Myanmar



Fundraising to support Wai Wai's advocacy work in the wake of the coup, which totaled **60K USD** through a combination of crowdfunding and corporate donations.

February 2021

December 2021



## Fundraising Support for Operation of YYLC

Raised **46K USD** to support YYLC's operating expenses.



## Business Development Consulting in Thailand

Discussed strategies for future organizational development including financial projections, organizational structure, as well as financial projections and fundraising plans.



# Wai Wai's Three-Year Summary of Advocacy Work

## Advocacy Work for the International Community



Wai Wai's advocacy work includes a lot of speaking, writing and campaigning; but, there is many other important work that doesn't always get the spotlight. Everyday, Wai Wai spends a lot of time **providing information and exchanging opinions with policy makers in international organizations and Western governments** to effect the dialogue around the issue.

In March 2022, the **U.S. government recognizing the genocide of the Rohingya persecution** was a major step forward made possible by Wai Wai and her fellow activists working together to lobby the U.S. President Biden and former President Barack Obama.

## Media Coverage

# 41

Articles, writings, and citations

After the coup, Wai Wai has spoken at numerous **media events in more than 20 countries**, to urge international communities to take action on the current situation in Myanmar. In addition, columns published in prominent diplomatic journals were widely shared among UN and government officials as well as prominent human rights activists around the world.

**Some of the publishing media:**

THE | DIPLOMAT

The New York Times

The Washington Post



ELLE

TIME



## International Awards

Over the past three years, **Wai Wai's work as a human rights activist has received international recognition and numerous awards**. Among others:



- ★ Copenhagen Democracy Summit 2021
- ★ International Religious Freedom Summit 2021 Youth Leadership Award
- ★ Athens Democracy Award 2021
- ★ DVF Award 2021

# Summary of Wai Wai's Three-Year Bottom-Up Activities

## Youth Empowerment and Democracy Movement



Although the YYLC program itself had to be suspended after the coup, the number of followers on Wai Wai's social media accounts increased **more than tenfold**.

As a young female leader of Rohingya origin, she supports young people involved in the democracy movement on social networking platforms and continues to expand her influence as their role model.

As the only educational institution in Myanmar that provides young people of different ethnic groups with opportunities to learn about human rights, democracy, and peacebuilding, YYLC has produced many next-generation leaders since its establishment.

The YYLC has been supporting the current democratization movement by reaching an even wider audience, including Rohingya refugee youth both inside and outside of Myanmar.

**Wai Wai's  
social media followers:**



**52,000**



**110,000**

## Selected by TIME Magazine!

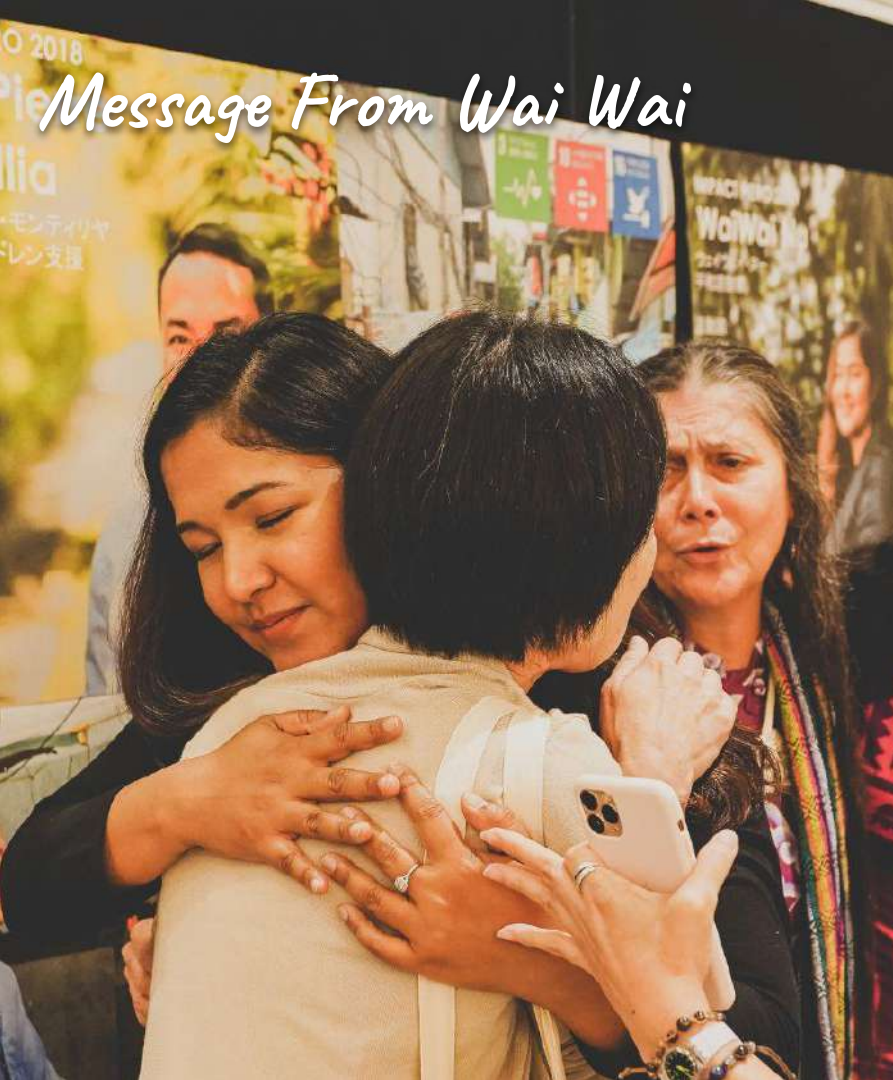
Ei Thinzar Maung, a female activist who was selected as one of **TIME Magazine's "100 Most Influential People" in 2021**, is a graduate of YYLC!

Originally from the Shan ethnic minority, Ei studied democracy and peacebuilding in YYLC's civic and political education program as a student.

She became the youngest ever deputy minister in the National Unity Government (NUG) established by the pro-democracy government, and has been an active voice for Myanmar's ethnic minorities, women, and youth.







## Message From Wai Wai

I would like to once again express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who donated to help us and the Earth Company team for their support of me, our activities, and our friends in Myanmar over the past three years.

What I realize now is that I was right to have always believed in the potential of young people to create a new inclusive society. Seeing how young people who had prejudice and discriminatory attitudes change as they interact with people from diverse backgrounds and be exposed to new values always empowers me and gives me the motivation to continue the work that I do for their inclusive futures.

It is never easy to influence the international community. Yet, after years of advocacy work, and with your support, I am now confident change is possible. In order to realize the future we are striving for, we must not give up even when it seems impossible. We must keep going even when the change seems so small - because one day, the seeds could flower.

We hope that you will continue to support our activities for the people of Myanmar, who still live without decent human rights.

~ Wai Wai Nu

# Future Challenges

Since the military coup in Myanmar, Wai Wai's work evolved significantly. As a human rights and peace activist of Rohingya origin, Wai Wai's influence in the international community is growing and the scope of her work expanding.

With the situation in Myanmar being still unstable, the responsibilities Wai Wai carries on a daily basis – ensuring the safety of her family and running an organization in Myanmar while internationally advocating for timely action – is too much for anyone to handle alone.

On the other hand, the world continues to face new challenges, and the news coverage of the situations in Myanmar dropped significantly. All the while, the suffering of its people under the Myanmar military regime is not getting any better.

Obtaining funding for organizations in Myanmar is a constant challenge. Without international support, continuation of the much-needed work by Wai Wai and her team will be challenging.




Although the results of their work may not be immediately visible, we appreciate your understanding of the importance of her impactful work, and hope that you will continue to support her going forward.

~ Earth Company Team




# How to support Wai Wai

## 1. Follow Wai Wai and Women's Peace Network's activities on social media

**Wai Wai**  
**(Burmese • English)**

 waiwainu  
 waiwainu  
 waiwainu

**Women's Peace Network**  
**(Burmese • English)**

 WomensPeaceNW  
 WPNmyanmar  
 womenspeacenetWORK

## 2. Make a Donation

**Crowdfunding to support women  
in refugee camps (English)**

<https://helprohingya.raisely.com/>



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Earth Company  
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