This paper explores the question about how academics may contribute to design or lead to institutional change with positive impact on gender issues in ASEAN countries.

Naoko KUWAHARA is Associate Professor at the Fukuyama City University in Japan. She receives MA and Ph.D. in International Development from Nagoya University in Japan and LL.M from University of Malaya in Malaysia. She also studied at SOAS for her Certificate of Communicative Arabic. For her Ph.D. dissertation, she wrote “Legal Reasoning of Islamic Divorce Law Reform and Gender in Malaysia”. Her recent researches focus on gender in Islamic law and politics, constitutionalism in Asia, and ICT role for democratization. She currently conducts extensive field research in Malaysia, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Prior to joining universities, she served as a legal expert for rule of law projects in Central Asia conducted by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) from 2005-2011.