

Ensuring energy transition benefits everyone

January 12, 2024 @ 12:06am



The UN climate conference opens in Dubai with nations under pressure to increase the urgency of action on global warming and wean off fossil fuels. -AFP/Jewel SAMAD

AS Malaysia progresses in the renewable energy sector, it is crucial to recognise the broader societal implications.



The transition can impact children, youth and marginalised communities positively by improving air quality, reducing health risks and providing new educational and employment opportunities in the green economy.

Prioritising a just transition involves creating green jobs, supporting affected workers and communities, and ensuring that the benefits of renewable energy are accessible to all.

Renewable energy sources offer advantages for the environment and society.

However, challenges accompany renewable energy sources including higher upfront costs, intermittent energy production, limited storage capabilities for certain sources and geographic limitations.

Recognising and addressing these challenges are crucial for a sustainable and resilient energy future.

While Malaysia has made commendable commitments, attention to financing and grid enhancement is necessary for a higher share of renewable energy in the electricity mix.

Exploring alternatives to natural gas such as combining renewable energy with nuclear energy can ensure a just, sustainable and secure transition.

Focusing on social inclusion, sustainable employment and resilient community development remains crucial.

The discussions at the recent 2023 Climate Change Conference (COP28) and Malaysia's efforts in renewable energy highlight a pivotal moment for shaping our energy future.

The promises made and goals set show a shared understanding of the need for a change.

But as we move to cleaner energy, it's crucial to consider not just the upsides and downsides but also to make sure everyone benefits in the process.

Let's aim for an energy future that's not just good for the environment but fair for everyone and makes economic sense too.

MOGESH SABABATHY

Youth Climate Champions consultant

Unicef Malaysia