



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

the phase-out of coal.

The absence of transitional fuels creates a space where oil and gas extraction can continue, stalling the advancement of equitable growth and sustainable development indefinitely. Positive and unfavorable features were discovered throughout the COP28 process. Positive moves included the reaffirmed calls for emissions reductions and the commitment to the 1.5°C trajectory. However, questions are raised over the COP's efficacy in addressing the gravity of the climate situation due to the weak discourse around the shift away from fossil fuels. As we examine the challenges posed by the COP28 results, it is critical to recognize the complexity of leadership. Governments are important in determining policy, but businesses, civic societies, and youth organizations also have leadership roles.

A substantial number of global emissions are covered by the commitments reported by nations, communities, and corporations globally through the Net Zero Tracker. Localized efforts to hold polluters accountable and invest in climate resilience, clean energy transition, and environmental justice are exemplified by initiatives like Washington state's Climate Commitment Act. There is some hope in the commitment of people and organizations working across sectors, despite COP28's faults, which has come to resemble more of a 'trade fare' than a leading

platform to promote equitable climate action; The real leaders of our day are committed individuals, who come from the public and business sectors, indigenous communities, youth leadership, NGOs, and academics. Their joint efforts demonstrate the variety of viewpoints and common goal of building a livable and prosperous planet.

The COP28 disappointments and obstacles are evidence of contemplation and a revised commitment to addressing the climate crisis. The solemn reminder of the work to be done is the absence of a clear mandate for the phase-out of fossil fuels. But if we address the climate catastrophe head-on, there is optimism that we can work together to overcome the obstacles and build a sustainable future for future generations.

This hope stems from the will of youth leadership to achieve climate justice and a sustainable future. At Save the Children Bangladesh, we have several initiatives promoting these such as equitable water governance and management of freshwater resources, supporting youth input in area development plans, and building agencies for youth to engage more effectively in Locally Led Adaptation efforts such as combating the spread of dengue and waterlogging.

*Nauman Zahur Haque is the Senior Advisor for Climate Change Adaptation at Save the Children in Bangladesh.*