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*As one of the first higher education institutions open to women in the world, Royal Holloway University is committed to equality of opportunity and strengthening the voices of disadvantaged and marginalized groups through its founding principles. It is a privilege to be invited to contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) given the fact that Governments may share the aims of the protestors, as in the case of climate activism.*

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<sup>1</sup> Sloam J. (2023). 'Youth Voice and Sustainable Public Policy: Rejuvenating Urban Democracy' in United Nations (Desa) *World Public Sector Report*, <https://desapublications.un.org/publications/world-public-sector-report-2023>, pp. 66-70.



and are more interested in engaging in issues they face in their everyday lives. Even when facing global challenges such as climate change, it is most important to empower young people to solve problems facing their own communities. The United Nations should, therefore, focus on the promotion of youth policy hubs at the local level.

At present there is a large gap in understanding amongst policy-makers about how to engage effectively with young people, and a tendency to interact with young people in ways that have no clear policy outputs. Global networks, such as those provided by the United Nations, are in a position to promote best practice solutions, which enable meaningful participation, and thereby promote a more inclusive and sustainable public policy. As Elinor Ostrom, Nobel Prize Winner for Economics, wrote:

“there is no reason to believe that bureaucrats and politicians, no matter how well meaning, are better at solving problems than the people on the spot, who have the strongest incentive to get the solution right”.

The pandemic and the climate crisis have forced policymakers to reconsider how they generate sustainable