Spotlight on our Youth: NextGen of Researchers

What was initially a three-month internship turned into one of the best two-year experiences for the young researchers attached to the United Nations European Union-funded Spotlight Initiative (SE) – an ambitious, multi-sectoral, interlinked, community-centered programme aimed at eliminating family violence and violence against women and girls in the Caribbean.

The internships were designed to improve the research knowledge and competencies of future young researchers with an academic background in Economics, Finance, and Psychology. The internships opened doors of opportunity for the young researchers to be globally recognised for their academic acumen and pursuits.

The young researchers acknowledged the critical role youth play in conducting research and the significant contribution they can make in helping to eradicate VAWG. They recommended that international development agencies including other UN agencies should capitalise on this opportunity for young researchers to contribute to the areas they are passionate about such as gender equality, economics, and women’s empowerment.

The internship was described by the young researchers as an “insightful and empowering experience,” one that, if given the opportunity again, “we would not change anything about our experiences as research assistants under the Spotlight Initiative.”

The young women highlighted the kindness, encouragement, and support from Isiuwa Iyahen – Deputy Representative and Marcia Lavine – Programme Associate of UN Women MCO – Caribbean which they described as unmatched. They relied heavily on strong communication as the internship was undertaken remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

There should always be a transfer of knowledge to the younger generations.

- Cedrina Carr