**Transcription of Walking interview with Martina**

Date and time: 03 May, 2023. Starting interview at 16:15 and walk at 16:25.

Duration: 40.03 mins

Distance covered: 0.83 km

Starting point: People's Community Centre

Route: From the Popular Community Centre to the water well. Passing through Llave street, stopping at the mural, the meeting place, and turning around at the school, at Arbol street, until we reach the well.

Notes:

This interview began at the Popular Community Centre. We sat at a table, and I talked with Martina about various topics. First, we talked about the pseudonym. She tells me that she likes the name Martina because this pseudonym reminds her of one of her children. Once we agreed on that, I told her that I had finished transcribing her interview and her diary and that I thought all of it was very good. I give her back the diary. We discuss the details of the walk-through interview and its usefulness. We record the informed consent of the walk-through interview. Afterwards, we start the interview, but we do it sitting down, in the popular community centre. This is to discuss some recent developments, as Martina is very involved in the leadership of the organisation, and the last interview we had was before the well was completed. We talked about the last phase and the last actions they are involved in as a group, and after ten minutes of the interview, we decided to start the walk.

During the first part of the interview, she tells me that the water is already reaching the houses through the network and that in recent months they have been correcting details of the functioning of the well. She also tells me that there were reports of a lack of water among the neighbours and that this led to a revision of the valves in some streets of the neighbourhood. She says that all this struggle has taught them to take care of the water, and not to allow any more large constructions in Santo Domingo that do not have the corresponding permits. The great conquest they have done is to defend the constitutional right to water and to ensure that there is a water supply in the network. She says that the well has had an impact in several ways, as it has also helped the school next to the building, which did not have water, and that even better drainage has been done to avoid flooding in that street.

After being in the popular community centre, we started the walk. During the walk, we go to the well, and we make stops at places that are significant for the neighbourhood struggle. The first of these places is the mural that the Water Defence Committee made a few years ago. Martina told me about when, how, and why they decided to do it. She also told me about the process they had to go through to get the mural done. She also told me to take pictures of some of the details, such as the ducks that were drawn, since they allude to the struggle against the construction of a flat tower near the neighbourhood, which damaged a shallow aquifer.

During the walk, Martina also tells me about her memories, and what it has meant to her to participate in this struggle. Also about the experience of contact with and between neighbours. We also stopped in the street where the meetings between neighbours take place and talked about the importance of such spaces to meet and talk.

Walking towards the well, Martina comments that this work has benefited the neighbourhood in several ways. This includes the issue of street lighting, and also drainage. We pass a school, whose car park was proposed as a site for the well by the neighbours.

Although Martina says that as neighbours they wished that the area would not be vandalised, we see that there is already some graffiti on the walls of the well. This graffiti however has a message stating that "water is not for sale, it is cared for and defended". It also says "progress of death". Martina makes no further comment, which leads me to believe that perhaps it is other neighbours who have done this graffiti, probably in tension with the decision to build a well.

Martina says that a better sewerage system was built to help prevent flooding in the vicinity of the well.

Martina tells me that when the well was built they decided not to cut down a tree that was already growing on the site. She sees that there is some rubbish near the tree.

During the walk, we talk about how the well has changed not only the existence of water in the colony but also the space itself. At the well, we concluded the walk. The weather was dry and it did not rain. I brought sun hats, but we didn't use them as it was a bit cloudy.

Participants: Interviewer [A] ; Martina [M]

TRANSCRIPTION

A: Well, to start the interview at the moment we are still here in the popular community centre, we are still sitting, it's a quarter past four, and finishing the last interview, one of the things we ended up talking about was the construction of the well. If I remember correctly, the interview was in December, and the well was about to be finished. Since then several things have happened, the well has been completed, and I wanted to ask you if you have noticed any changes with the construction of the well, what have your impressions been from December to now, in what has been this whole struggle in the defence of water here in Santo Domingo?

M: Well, yes, changes have been noticed, because mainly the people see reflected in their homes the struggle we had for the construction of the well, why? Well, because now the water supply reaches their homes in the way it should be, through the network, not by a water truck, something random and arbitrary. Now it is coming through the network, which is what we all wanted.

By the end of the year, the well was finished, they began to do the tests, to remove all the dirty water, let's say, that accumulated with debris, sediment and everything, and then they did the real clean water tests, and then they made the direct connection to the network. We were also present, the connection was made and all the people were satisfied.

After that there were some faults, for example, that the electricity had not been properly connected, that the water tank that is upstairs to supply the needs of those who are going to look after, wash hands, the toilet, was being thrown away, that suddenly cars were parked where they shouldn't be, it should be a free zone because they reach the chemical products, let's say. Because even when it is clean water it has to be treated. And little details that little by little we reported and they were corrected, to the extent that there was nothing more to complain about to the company, and the only thing that was left pending was the adjoining neighbours, who had not complied with their demands to repair their homes.

Fortunately that too was concluded, the government agreed with SACMEX (the city's water system). SACMEX covered the financial needs of the neighbours and it was solved. And then we thought that everything was fine, until the neighbours started to report that they had been without water for 20 days, a month, 15 days, and we said, "well, something is happening". So we started to mobilise, we held a meeting with the whole committee, and well, we started with the previous procedure we had, of saying to the government "well, if you are not supplying me with water, then send me water trucks, so that I can solve my problem temporarily".

So yes, they started supplying us with water trucks, but we asked for the valves to be checked, because we believe that this is a valve problem. And we believe that there are people who, with all their malice, moved the valves. Because it is not normal that the first few days that the well was working, it was reaching the neighbours correctly, and then suddenly from one day to the next it started, and especially in the street that is Llave. Everything on that street and the streets that cross it had no water.

A: So it was very localised there.

M: The problem was very localised. So we asked for the valves to be checked again, and I think they started to check them because, well, the director, the person in charge of the SACMEX office didn't give us an appointment. We are still waiting for an appointment. So, well, fortunately they solved it because we haven't had any reports of so many days without water. And all the neighbours are in agreement that a tandeo should be carried out, let's say. But within the days that you are entitled to, well, that you don't run out of water.

A: So the tandeo continues.

M: We don't know, because there are houses where it arrived some days and then it arrived on others, and on others it was gone, and the day it arrived, it arrived with very little pressure, which is not normal either. So we said to the authorities, "well, tell us if you are carrying out the tandeo as we had it", so that the people know that for the three and a half days that they have, they have to save a bit of water. And well, we also learned to take care of the water.

A: Yes.

M: So that's a very important point because we don't waste a lot of water, we recycle, we reuse what we can,

because there are parts of, for example, if you wash the dishes, that water comes out with grease, let's say, that maybe you can use it for the toilet, but you can't use it for anything else. But we did learn to take care of the water, we learned to recycle it, to reuse it, and so we continue, we continue, not because the well is already built our struggle is over. The struggle will always go on, so that the neighbours are happy that the water is reaching them.

A: Since they reported and everything, there have been no more needs, meetings, or anything like that.

M: No, there hasn't been any need, in fact we spent, what can I say, about three weeks more or less gradually solving the problem, and we don't think there has been a problem because no one has asked for a water truck, nor has anyone reported that they haven't had water for eight days. So, sometimes we need to finalise details, but since we are now dealing with the electricity issue, we say, well, it's not that this isn't important, but for us it is a little less important than the electricity issue.

A: And on the issue of water, to finish this part sitting down, and then move on, what would be the objectives now that the struggle continues?

M: Well, the objectives are not to allow the government to continue with the big constructions, let's say here in Santo Domingo. Or, if they are going to build them, they should show their permits. Because one thing is that I as a company, which is what Quiero Casa did, right? There in Aztecas 215, they didn't even have permits, they didn't even have, they lacked a lot of documentation, but they started to build, they started to build and they skipped rules, laws and everything. And when they already had the construction, when we started to demand that they stop it, that's when they started to do the permit procedures, etcetera. But they take advantage of the fact that they already have an advance in construction to stop it, something that we don't care about, right? I mean, you dared, take responsibility, right?

So now what we are looking after is that part, that they don't want to build another complex, like Aztecas 215, without the corresponding permits.

A: Which includes water, I imagine.

M: It includes many things, it includes land use. Here in Coyoacán, for example, or at least here in Santo Domingo, because of the land use, you are not allowed to build more than three floors. So if you want to build more than three floors, you are already outside the law. If you get a permit to do that, there is corruption. So, legally it is not allowed.

So we take care, for example, of that part, we take care of the part that there is no manipulation as there used to be. There were going to be votes to renew the Congress of Representatives or to renew the government and then there was a tremendous manipulation with the water issue. In other words, it was like a campaign slogan for those who were fighting for a position in the government. So we are not allowing that. I mean, water is no longer a banner for you to say, now I'm going to push it this way. No. At least here in Santo Domingo, better elsewhere.

A: It is no longer a political weapon.

M: No, not any more. That is another struggle that little by little has been won and it has been explained to the people that they don't have to leave in that sense. In other words, water is a right, a constitutional right. So they don't have to manipulate you, or blackmail you, or treat it as a gift. Saying "if you give me something, I will do you the favour of giving you water". No, we have to learn to push, to insist and to make our rights valid. So that's another part that we take care of.

Another part that we take care of is that people are happy with the water supply. Another part that we take care of is that the sewers, for example, are in good condition, that they are not clogged, that they are cleaned out. Even there, near the well, there is something in the street to catch the water, so that it doesn't flood. So we are constantly making sure that the well is drained, precisely so that now that the rainy season is coming, it won't flood. Because yes, building a well is not easy. It's not easy to get authorisation. Getting the neighbours to agree is even more complicated. So we also make sure that the neighbours around the well are not unhappy. The mayor's office of Coyoacán, for example, has given us a lot of support in that sense. Because the school next to the well has also benefited. Because repairs have been made to it that had not been done before.

A: The school benefited.

M: It benefited. And so did the secondary school upstairs. Because before, they even stopped classes because of the lack of water.

A: Uh-huh. Before they stopped classes because there was no....

M: Because there was no water, I mean, not even to wash the children's hands.

A: And then they also had more water.

M: Now they don't lack water, so they also benefited in that sense. And in terms of tree pruning, in terms of having their street lights checked, in terms of it being a safer area. So the well has been included in many ways, not only in the water supply.

A: Yes, the well has brought more and more benefits, hasn't it?

M: More benefits, exactly, than harm, let's say.

A: Well, if it's okay with you, we can start the tour now.

M: Yes.

A: Let's hang the microphone [we hang the microphone with the shoelace around her neck]. Ready, so let's start [we start the walk leaving the popular community centre].

We're going to start the Walk, and register that we're starting at 4.28 pm.

M: Aha.

A: So, then, let's start.

M: Uh-huh. We're going to go out to Musica Street. A: Ok. And then to Llave Street, which is the one I was telling you about, which is the street that once the well was finished, it started to have problems. Even here, part of the popular community centre, this street called Música, the other one that is behind it. And so the little streets that border in some way or that cross with Llave began to have supply problems.

A: And as we move forward, Martina, what has all this meant for you, participating in the struggle in defence of water?

M: Well, participating in the committee was something beautiful and at the same time sad, because you realise that although you want to open many doors, the authorities close them. So you have to be constant, you have to be on top of people, but in the end it is very gratifying to get results.

So, it represents many things. For me it represents struggle, tenacity, effort. Sometimes, or many times, doors were closed to us, but our insistence opened them. In many government spaces. For example, they would give us appointments, and then a quarter of an hour or even a minute before the start they would cancel them and change the date or the place, or the time. So, yes, it was complicated, but I repeat, we gradually overcame everything and it's satisfying that if you have a goal in mind, you achieve it

A: So, in your experience, the struggle in defence of water has not only taken place here, but in other offices, in other spaces. You have had to move to many places, haven't you?

M: Yes, I mean, the construction of a well involves many authorities. For example, it involves the mayor's office for the space, it involves SACMEX, it involves the central government, it involves the federal government. So, there are many authorities involved. And well, we were always very consistent and we always followed up. We were always going to the meetings. And if they cancelled them, we insisted that we get them again. [noise of a car engine is heard]

A: Yes, here is the service of the trolley that distributes the jugs, isn't it?

M: Uh-huh, yes. It's just that the water, even though it's clean, let's say, it's not safe to drink. Look, this is Llave Street. [we arrived at that street]. So, this is the one that had the biggest problem and the streets that cross it. From where the well is now, upwards, the supply was not lost, that's the funniest thing. Upwards it wasn't lost, but towards the part here, let's say more towards the centre, it was lost. That was the strange thing.

A: Which way up is it?

M: Like for the passage to the CU metro. For that entrance. Because Alma, I don't know if you remember her.

A: Yes, I do.

M: She lives closer to the passage. She lives in Cactus Street. And before that, she was really one of the ones who had the most problems getting water.

So, since the well was built, they haven't been short of water. And they live a bit higher up. But I'm telling you, from the well to this area here where we are, that's where it started to fail.

A: And most of the neighbours live in this street, in this area?

M: In this area, everything from, let's say from Casa Street to, even from where the popular community centre is, about four or five streets over there, they all belong to the committee. Or there are people who belong to the committee and who live near those houses.

A: And do you think that the fact that they all live more or less close to each other has an influence on whether they participate more or whether they are more animated?

M: Yes, that has a lot of influence because when a result is given, it is zoned. So, it's a very marked area that didn't have water and now that area has water. Look, this is the street of Fuerza. And here, this street is very emblematic for us because here around the corner is a mural. We can see it anyway.

M: Yes, just wait for that car to pass. [We wait for a car to pass and we cross the street] This mural really represents a lot for us. Because it was done in collaboration. First the idea came up that, well, we should do something very emblematic about our struggles. Here we mention the struggle for water, we mention the struggle for electricity, the struggle for territory, the struggle of all the people who are discontented. Look, against real estate, Aztecas 215 is mentioned here.

A: [looking at the mural and reading] No one should go without water, the electricity industry, yes. I'll take a photo.

M: [looking at the mural and reading] We want a well. And then the design was made and with a very advanced technique, right? A projection was made. And then the projection was put here with the drawing. And then we all cooperated, some with paint, others cooperated by painting, others cooperated by donating this space or painting in their homes. At the end of the day, we all gave our opinion when the design was made, what it lacked, what it needed, what we wanted it to have. And that's why it's very emblematic for us.

Apart from the fact that we had been, what can I tell you, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, eight months of pandemic. That was when the pandemic was at its strongest and yet people responded very satisfactorily. And there are people who still came to participate here and who were left behind, who died because of the pandemic and were unable to see the dream of building the well come true.

So I tell you, that's why we love this mural so much because it represents many things, many who stayed in the struggle, who despite the pandemic we didn't stop fighting, we learned to use social networks, for example, to communicate because it was forbidden to hold meetings. So we started to use the famous Zoom and we held virtual meetings and we tried to get meetings with the authorities that were virtual, but we didn't stop. That's why we love this mural so much.

A: It's very nice, yes.

M: Yes, look [looking at the mural] these ducks, for example, represent part of what the real estate company Quiero Casa did with the ecocide, because there was a lake where there were ducks. And when the construction company arrived, what happened? Well, the ducks no longer had a home, birds that were endemic to the area had to emigrate.

A: Yes, the ducks arrived, I've seen some photos. And how symbolic that they are here now.

M: Aha, yes, precisely because they are part of the Aztec 215 movement. And without water, well, as we all say, it seems like it was already very repetitive phrase, but without water there is no life, it's as easy as that. And we saw it with these ducks that had to leave the space they had because of the lack of water.

A: Do you think that something like the lack of water also affects life, but human life?

M: Well, yes, lack of water, undoubtedly. Look, I've been listening to the news.

[greets a neighbour who is walking by].

Good afternoon, here we are, look.

I've heard news about Spain, for example. I have a channel that broadcasts news from Spain and, well, from part of Europe. But I'm very struck by the fact that in Spain they are losing a lot of crops, a lot of crops, and livestock.

Why? Because of the lack of water. Because right now this should be a rainy season and it hasn't rained. It is very dry. So what is happening? Well, water is life. If human beings don't have water, imagine.

A: And here, well, we're still walking around Llave, the lack of water has affected the lives of all the people, hasn't it?

M: Yes, it affected the lives of all the people since before the well was built because there was no water here.

[a person passes by, asking for paletas].

Good afternoon, popsicles? ice cream?

M: Good afternoon, thank you.

[We arrive at the corner where the meetings are held] Here we hold our meetings regularly, here in Patos Street.

A: Patos, almost on the corner of here and Llave. How did you decide to hold them here?

M: One because it was close to the well area. Another because it's more central for everyone. In other words, some come from Cactus Street, from the CU metro station, others come from Musica Street, and other streets, that way. Others come from this part of here, from Patos, from Casa. So this street is kind of central, and there are neighbours who are part of the committee.

And well, we used to hold our meetings here and we will continue to do so if there is a need, obviously.

A: Yes, the whole street fills up.

M: It gets very crowded when the meetings are held. People are very participative. And that's what we tell them, isn't it? In other words, the struggle doesn't end when the well is built. I mean, no, comrades, we have to keep fighting, we have to defend what we have already won. And many people, for example, who were against the construction of the well said that they were going to take that water for other projects.

For example, in the Azteca Stadium, now that the World Cup is coming up, which is going to be shared with Canada and the United States, they have a very big project to build a shopping centre, a hotel and make them like those in the first world. The stadiums. And well, I hope it goes well, but a lot of people said that the water from this well is going to be taken to the Azteca Stadium. But there's no way they're going to take it, because that well is connected to the Santo Domingo network. How are you going to take water that's in a network? And it would have to go, imagine, from Santo Domingo, it would have to go through Ajusco, Santa Ursula and even the Azteca Stadium. So there would be a lot of leaps that would have to be made. It doesn't make sense.

A: And here in participating in the defence of water, Martina, do you think it has helped you to get to know the neighbours better?

M: Yes, yes, look, it's difficult to locate all of them or to name all of us, isn't it? Because there are so many of us, there are about 220, 230 families that make up the neighbourhood. But they can easily identify us. So anyone who is from the committee and who sees you, knows that you are from the committee. So, whether they greet you or talk to you on the phone or tell you about a problem, not related to water, but, for example, that there are water leaks, which is another task we have. In other words, if there is a water leak, we report it to the group. And from the group we take care of reporting it to the authorities so that the authorities can repair it. Look, this is the secondary school. [we walk and arrive at the school].

A: Here on Llave and Tletl, is it next to the primary school?

M: Uh-huh. They are, so to speak, back to back. The primary school has an entrance on Atl and the secondary school on Llave.

A: And this is the secondary school that benefited from the well.

M: Yes, it benefited. In fact, when the authorities didn't want the well to be built here on this street, they had considered the possibility of building it here in the car park of the secondary school. But now it is in a federal zone and permits have to be obtained and then it causes a lot of inconvenience, for example, for the children's classes because of the noise and all that.

So we went back to the first project, to plan A, which was there. And other engineers came, they took measurements and said, well, if we make a move or two here, there was a shed that was there on the corner.

A: And the tap, right?

M: And the tap, uh-huh, but the shed was knocked down and the tap was moved. That tap was also very useful. It was very useful because many of the people here and elsewhere, not just here, knew that there was a tap there and that there, at that tap, there was never a shortage of water. So they would bring their jugs and fill them up, at least to cover their most basic needs.

A: Yes, and do you think that this struggle for the well also helped the neighbours around here to get to know each other better?

M: Yes, because you know that this life that we live now is a bit complicated for you to get to know people. Why? Because your economic needs are not covered by one person in the marriage, sometimes both of you work. So they go out to work, they leave their children at school and you don't have a social life with your neighbours, so to speak. So…

A: Shall we go on to Llave or turn back to Árbol?

M: Ah, yes, if you want we can turn around here. [We go round to Árbol Street and continue along there.]

I was saying, it is a bit complicated to get to know people nowadays because everyone is busy with work and this doesn't allow us to have much of a social life with neighbours. Many of us already knew each other because we arrived around the same time when the neighbourhood began. But we stopped seeing each other. So when the committee was formed, many of us met again. And we also met different people, new people, with other ideas, who can nourish the group.

A: For example, you usually see the neighbours at the water and electricity meetings.

M: Aha.

A: And outside of the assemblies, do you have any other space in which you can interact with the neighbours? Or is it something more like just a greeting?

M: Yes, just like saying hello and that's all, because now we all have our own activities and it's complicated, unless it's a social meeting. You might meet three, four, five, ten neighbours, or at Sunday mass. You might meet several neighbours there. But apart from that, no.

A: So the electricity and water meetings are useful to at least see each other...

M: Yes. In the meetings we socialise a little with people, to find out how they are, and if they need any help with anything. So yes, it does help us. And we don't stop seeing each other for that long.

The truth is that, in the Water Committee, we have stopped a little now. Although officially the inauguration of the well has not taken place. But we haven't seen each other as often as before.

But in the electricity committee, at least once a month, we see each other. So yes, as neighbours, we keep in touch.

A: And the meetings of the light committee are held there by the Iglesia de Colores church, right?

M: Aha, yes, there, next to the Iglesia de Colores, that's where those meetings are held.

A: And there are people who are in both groups, the Water Committee and the Committee of Electricity?

M: Yes, in fact I think that 50% of the people from the Water Committee belong to the Committee of Electricity. That's why it was so easy for us to form the Water Committee. Because we are the same neighbours, although we fight for different things, we are the same neighbours. And what better way to unite to get more results. And so yes, we've arrived here, look, this is the primary school. [we arrived at the school].

A: Here is the primary school?

M: And the well is there on the side.

A: Well yes, it was several months, wasn't it? Or even years, because of the well.

M: Well, in the struggle, since we started with the idea of building the well, since 2016.

A: [reading some letters written on the wall as if vandalising it] Here I saw that someone wrote, "water is not for sale...".

M: It is cared for and defended, progress, who knows what.

A: Of death, it says

M: That's supposed to be graffiti, and they're not supposed to graffiti, right?

A: [looking into the well] Ah, look, even a pine tree.

M: Aha, it's just that this pine tree was already here and they didn't want it removed. So it remains here.

A: What's that sound? [referring to a noise heard from the well].

M: This is the noise, uh-huh, the normal noise they make, the electrical thing, I don't know, from the well. It's working. And every day a person in charge comes every day to check that the whole system is working properly.

A: A person in charge of SACMEX?

M: From SACMEX, uh-huh. Look, this is the sewer that I'm telling you about.

A: Ah, ok.

M: Here, this drain.

A: That's for water collection, then?

M: Ah, yes, and it also prevents flooding, because the neighbours, for example, here, many of them complained that it flooded. So those sewers couldn't cope, or they were constantly clogged, because they weren't properly drained. So now that it has rained a few days, I have a son who is married, he lives up here on Patos Street. And on Tuesdays we go up to see him and on our way back we pass by here and we've seen that the water hasn't accumulated enough to flood. And now that the rainy season is starting, from about mid-May onwards, we'll have to be on the lookout to make sure that they clean and clear this drain and the sewer that's over there.

A: So that has been part of what the well has influenced as well.

M: Aha, and if you notice, it's not dirty, let's say, it's not a dirty area. If you notice, there were no thugs, let's say, but the area is clean of bad people. You can see that rubbish is constantly being collected, you can see that there is lighting because at night the well is lit up and illuminates the whole area, making people feel safer. And so I tell you, it's one of the benefits that it has brought, not only the water supply, that rainwater doesn't flood, that it's a safer area. Also, there is a primary and secondary school, and you don't see children wandering around.

A: And this is where the shed was, then.

M: Here in the corner, right there, and that's where we changed the tap.

A: There was another tap there, then.

M: No, this is where the shed was and the tap was a bit further on around the corner past the shed. It was, what can I tell you, about eight metres from here, from the corner. So when the work on the well was going to start, we didn't cancel it or anything, we decided to relocate it so that it wouldn't stop providing service to those who really needed water. And there were tremendous lines, all day long, of people coming to get water. And now you see, there are no people at all.

A: So the tap was moved a little bit.

M: Yes, it was changed, relocated, let's say. Because from being here on Árbol Street, it was moved to Atl Street.

A: Yes, it was moved a little bit.

M: Uh-huh, but it didn't stop providing service. There's the tap there. And so this is, this is where the struggle is reflected.

A: Yes, what would you like for the future of the neighbourhood?

M: For the future, I would like my children, in the future, and my grandchildren, if God gives them children, to not lack water. Because the struggle that we went through, well, we are grown up now, we are on our way out. But there are generations coming after us. And what we don't want is for there to be a lack of water. The engineers say that this well can have a life of 30 to 40 years. Hopefully in 30 or 40 years our children will have learned from this struggle, so that the construction of this well is not lost, that it is relocated and placed in an area where there is no lack of water.

Because since the neighbourhood Santo Domingo was formed, we have suffered a lot, a lot, a lot for water. So maybe you can live without electricity, light your candle, you can live without a paved street, you can live without, what can I say, drainage. For example, we didn't have drainage because as it is a volcanic area, we used the cracks. There were many cracks, so what our parents did was to look for a crack and all the waste went through there. So it was possible to live like that, but without water it is not possible to live.

A: What do you like about Santo Domingo?

M: Well, notice that a lot of people criticise, "Oh, where do you live? In Santo Domingo? Oh no". It's a neighbourhood that has a reputation for being very ugly. But no, we've lived here for so many years, I've lived here for, I don't know, between 47 and 49 years. So now I know all the zones, all the areas, I know a lot of people. I'm not afraid to walk down the street at 10 o'clock at night or to get out of the metro and walk home, I'm not afraid. I'm not afraid. Why? Because I have lived here all my life.

I do like my neighbourhood. I would like it to improve in many ways, with more green spaces and places where our children can have healthy coexistence. And in that way, the environment obviously changes. But we don't want real estate developers, because that changes the environment, but for the worse. Because that brings people from a different social level, they start to put in shopping centres, they start to raise costs. And people who are from a lower class sometimes don't have the means to cover these expenses or these increases in living costs. So that's why we don't want real estate here. And we want our neighbourhood to improve, of course we do. Who doesn't want their environment to improve? But in a healthy way, in a way that benefits all of us who live in that environment.

A: Thank you very much, Martina, for your time with this interview.

M: No, thank you, I hope you find it useful.

A: Do you want to add anything else, or do you want to go somewhere else? I think it's been a good conversation.

M: Yes, no, I mean it's, for my part it's a good walkthrough, I think we reflected part of what the problem was, we commented on some of the construction, some of the environment. And I hope it's useful for you, we're very happy that you were part of this committee. And we are even happier that the struggle that we have had is useful to you. Because at the end of the day that is what we want, that people get to know Santo Domingo, but that they get to know it because of these struggles, because its people are tenacious, because they don't give up, because they demand their rights. That this is the vision that people outside Santo Domingo have of us.

A: And what did you think of this walk? What did you think of the interview on the walk?

M: Good, good, because you remember things, what your neighbourhood was like when you arrived, that the streets weren't paved, that when it rained it was a mess because it was a muddy mess everywhere, puddles everywhere.

A: Has it changed a lot?

M: It has changed a lot, yes. Imagine, the neighbourhood is 51 years old since the invasion. And I've been living here for 47, 49 years, although my grandparents lived here before the invasion. And so yes, it reminds you of many things, doesn't it? You always have the patience to walk, to remember, to talk. You see the children pass by and you remember, oh, when we used to go out to play on the bicycle or when we built a park, where I live, there's a park opposite. And when my children were, what can I tell you, about 3, 2 years old, that space was gained, then the men and women started to help as much as we could. And well, you remember that at that time our children went to plant some trees that are now part of the park and the trees are now big. So yes, it's nice to make memories like that.

A: Well, thank you very much. We can end the interview here.

M: Yes, we can.