

Immigrant Seafood Processing Woman- Interview #15

Anonymous

35 Years old

Female

Seafood Processing-

New Bedford, MA

Guatemalan

Interviewer: Corinn Williams

Transcriber: Corinn Williams

Place of interview: New Bedford, MA

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CW-Hello, It's Corinn Williams it's August 26, 2010 and I will be conducting an interview with a woman in seafood processing, and I am going to switch to Spanish right now.

(Spanish) Hello, Welcome. I'm here to listen to the story of your life if you are willing to share it with us. Every story we listen to helps us understand women's experiences who are working in the fishing industry and of how government regulations and other factors can affect your life and your family's life. This project attempts to reach people whose voices are seldom heard, and whose stories and realities are often misunderstood. Given that, your voice is very important how the lives of immigrant women in the fishing industry might differ than those who have been here for many years. You are aware that this interview is anonymous and your name and address will not be included, it is anonymous, and you are aware that we are recording?

I15- Yes of course.

CW- And the purpose of the study is to measure the social impact of the fishing regulations and for other educational purposes and it is part of several interviews about the experiences of immigrant women in the fishing industry.

CW- And if you would like to take a break, just let me know. OK?

I15- OK

CW- Well, So let's start with where and when you were born?

I15- Good afternoon, first , my birth date?

CW- Yes.

I15- June 9, 75. (1975)

CW—And where?

I15-In Guatemala

CW- In what part of Guatemala?

I15- In a little town called Sacatepéquez, in the Department of Quetzaltenango, and I am from a village called La Unión. The reason why I am here for this interview is that I came to this place, I came in '99 and now this March, I understand by my calculations I will have been here twelve years in this country.

(3:01) CW- Twelve years? Well, we will talk about your life here a bit later, let's start by telling us a little about what life was like there where you grew up, what was the house like, your family?

I15- Well the truth is that when I came, we didn't have a house, our house was made just of bamboo as we call it *tarras*, my house was very poor, and my family was very poor, I come from a very large family (gets tearful, choked up). There are twelve of us, twelve people-right? And the bad luck was that my father had the bad vice of drinking, and my mother washed clothes of other people to earn a living, to buy soap, to wash our clothes. And thanks to the great sacrifice of my saint of a Mother (Santa Madre) and God has her in Glory because she left us in '97. And my family was very poor, and for me to see so much poverty over there I made the decision to come here in order to help them, I heard from people there that over here you could earn money and you could make some money, and that is how I came to this country, to have a job and I started working in a fish company and so...

CW- Well I know it is difficult sometimes to remember, so you lived in a house with twelve siblings?

I15- Well it wasn't a house really, it was like one room, because we didn't even know what was a room because we were too poor.

CW- What kind of work did your father do?

I15- My father was a day worker (*jornalero*) he worked on a farm, sometimes he would cultivate the land.

CW- But you didn't have your own land?

I15-No, we didn't our own, unfortunately we were so poor

CW- And your mother worked?

I15- My mother washed people's clothes for 25 quetzals for a large wash, because she needed to take care of us she couldn't go to work for a company and also she wouldn't have been able to find work anyway. So she washed other people's clothes and with that money she helped us buy our little notebooks. Some of my little brothers went to 1st grade, others went to second grade and the other ones didn't want to go, because they were already too big and they were ashamed to go and later my mother told me that she was worried about them because they don't know anything. And my mother tried to struggle (to have us go to school) and some of us went a little bit and others didn't want to go. But we were very poor.

CW- And were you the oldest or youngest?

(6:02) I15-No I was almost one of the last ones, after me there were two (siblings) more and that was the end of the family, I was number nine or ten, more or less, I'm the ninth. So that is my story

CW- Did you help your mother washing clothes?

I15- No, What I did from a very young age of nine or ten, I saw that my mother suffered a lot and there wasn't enough from what she earned for the food, so I made the decision to go to the Capital.

CW- When you were nine years old?

I15- When I was nine years old I was about to turn 10 and I went to the Capital.

CW-All by yourself?

I15- With some neighbors. A neighbor brought me and said that they needed someone to work there.

CW- And she worked in the Capital too.

I15-She worked in the Capital too and that is how I came to work cleaning a house. I cleaned, washed the dishes, mopped, swept, I helped dress the kids who went to school. I earned very little but with my first pay (gets choked up), I put it in an envelope and sent it to my mother.

And my mother was so sad and she said” I would prefer if you were here with me and not the money” because she thought I was having a hard time being so far away. For me it is difficult to remember, but I want to share this. So from the time I was in the Capital, I turned fifteen, I was away from my mother, away from my family in that time there was no way to celebrate your fifteenth birthday, I didn’t know anything about that. And so my story is so hard it is difficult to remember it.

CW- You were working in the Capital...

I15- I was working in the Capital until my fifteenth, sixteenth birthday. When I was seventeen I got another job because I felt capable. I found a job working in a factory there.

CW- What kind of factory?

I15- It was a nylon rope factory for farms it was called Olifina CCA, I worked there many years and there I met my boyfriend who is my husband now, and he said that here we could have a better life. But being there on Guatemala all the money I earned was first for my mother, sometime I wouldn’t buy something for myself because I sent it for my little brothers and sisters who were there. I tried to get them to go to school, to achieve what I couldn’t.

CW- How many years did you go to school?

I15- I went to school for a year and a half. I went through the first grade and in the middle of the second grade I left school because we were poor and I decided to go to the Capital. I suffered from being so far away from my mother but I knew that is how I was able to help her. And she said “no, daughter no don’t go something could happen to you” but I said “no Mama, I’m going to see how I can help you” and she cried bitterly, and got on her knees (to pray) so that nothing would happen to me. But my father finally came to his senses, and he didn’t want to drink anymore because he was already very sick from asthma and the alcohol had affected his blood, so thankfully I was in the Capital and later I had my boyfriend and we got married there.

CW- So you met him in the Capital but was he from your town?

(9:54) I15- No he is from Quiche, a place called Chinque. And he is a good man, certainly. God know as they say, God has great mercy, because despite all that I have suffered, God gave me the gift of a good husband and I decided to get married. I used to say I never wanted to get married because I didn’t want someone to give me orders and I wanted to help my mother. I would say “ I don’t want a husband, I don’t want anyone to tell me that I can’t help out my mother but I discussed it with him and he said that it didn’t matter and he would even help me send money to my mother too. And later I got married when I was 24 years old and later he told me that he had some friends over here (U.S). And they helped him and I stayed there and he

said that I shouldn't get pregnant because with children I couldn't join him here because if you have children you have to stay here because with children it is difficult to cross the border. So that is how we decided to come here, a friend helped him come first, and a year and a half close to two years later he helped me, He had to get the money together because it is a lot of money.

CW- So he already had friends here in New Bedford?

I15-He had his cousin .

CW- A cousin was here. Was that twelve years ago?

I15-No that cousin has been here thirteen years and my husband has been here longer like a year and a half . So he has been here thirteen going on fourteen years and I have been here eleven going on twelve years. In March it will be twelve years because I remember well that I came in '99.

CW- During the time thinking about when you lived in Guatemala, did you ever go to the sea or visited the sea? Or did you ever imagine that you would have a life working with fish?

(12:00) I15-No I certainly didn't go to the sea because of the same poverty. We would hear about a lot of people who would travel and they went, we just heard about it but we didn't know anything about it, and to come here I never imagined that due to the fish I was able to get ahead Thank God and thanks to those companies that God blessed too and we ask God to continue blessing them to give work to us, because since I came here I have been working at that fish company.

CW- At the same company?

I15- At the same company Thank God. We don't earn much but the most important thing is that we have steady hours and with that money we can help and send money. Unfortunately we had set aside some money to build a little house over there because over there they just have a little room and when I came they were living very poorly, it was just one room where everyone slept. But coming here God blessed me, I made it across, I suffered a lot in the desert, I thought I was going to die.

CW- How did you leave, with someone you knew?

I15- No it was just like that, with people I didn't know, we met up with Salvadorans, Hondurans from all the countries.

CW- You suffered a lot?

I15-I suffered a lot. I thought I was going to die. It was hard in the dessert. Sometimes it is hard to remember, one can't imagine what you have to go through to just earn a little money. But yes, I am here and I am very grateful with my little job I have been able to get ahead and send a little money to my family, unfortunately my mother died in '97 (note: she means 2007) . It was very hard because we couldn't do anything, I had a little bit of money with my job but she....only God knows when we are born and when we die, it is hard to understand it but we have to understand that life is hard and that we all have to die.

CW- What a shame. But you were able to talk to her?

I15- I could talk to her right along every fifteen days, or every month. I tried to speak to her consistently including the week before she died I spoke to her and I couldn't believe that she died. She ruptured a blood vessel, it seems she had a large irritation and the blood vessel was large and I don't know much about this , but I understand they did an autopsy, I had some money and I wanted them to do it because my mother had died, so they did it.

CW- So she wasn't sick before it happened?

I15- She wasn't sick before and she got a pain in her stomach and she died just like that. And so it was difficult they said that it was a blood vessel that ruptured in her stomach, I don't know much about these things but, Thank God my father is there, he is 75 years old.

CW- So a blood vessel?

(15:21) I15-They say a blood vessel burst. It was a burst blood vessel that killed her.

CW- So all of your brothers and sisters are over there?

I15- All of my brother and sisters are scattered, some are living with someone, others got married. Each one has made their own life. My brothers and sisters are very poor; they have a lot of children. I have a lot of nieces and nephews, one of my brothers has nine kids, another seven, another eight, All my brothers and sisters are scattered, my nieces and nephews are big. I have a lot, I was adding them up the other day, I have 26 nieces and nephews. But Thanks God, the most important thing is that they are not sick although they are poor but at least they have a chance because my siblings are working, some on a farm, some on their own farms to support their children.

CW- None of them came here?

I15-No they didn't come here only I came here (at first). After I could help my other two brothers. My brothers are here Thank God, they are making a little bit of money and sending it back so that their children can study in Guatemala. And the children are very happy when they

talk to their father and they know that some money will come for school. They are very happy because the tuition is very expensive and the notebooks and they are here working in the fish companies.

CW- How many brothers?

I15- Three.

CW- Three here and how many over there?

I15- Nine.

CW- Nine in total?

I15- Nine but four have died, so there are only five left.

CW- And sisters?

I15- We are seven boys and five girls but there are 3 girls living. My family is very large but very poor and that is the reason I am here. I am very happy and my purpose here is to work hard and to give a better life for my children, to give them what I didn't have, and Thank God there are possibilities here, right? My desire is to move my children ahead. Work is hard, we have to get up early, getting the children up to go to school, after work you pick them up, and there is not much time you can spend with them but still be are thankful, struggling we are getting ahead with our children. That is our purpose- to have our children get ahead.

CW-So you decided to come to the United States, thinking back to that time, what had you heard about the United States? What ideas did you have about life over here?

(18:29) I15- What we thought was that it was so easy to make money here. That there were great walkways, that it was so easy, everyone used to tell us. There was someone who came back to my town, there are not many from there who are here, but from other towns they had said that here there are things, appliances that we didn't even know about, and it made us very excited but coming here we found out that yes there is money here but you have to work very hard as well.

CW- Did you have a difficult trip passing through the desert? If you don't wish to recall it that's ok but thinking about when you finally arrived in New Bedford, you crossed the border in the United States, how was that, difficult?

I15- That was difficult and as I said and I repeat that my story is very long because I came in '98 but I came to New Bedford in '99. I arrived in November of '98 and I went to Glasgow, Kentucky to the home of a friend of my husband.

CW- Glasgow, Kentucky?

I15- Glasgow, Kentucky I was there until November, December, January, February, March with the friend of my husband who had been living here longer and she bought me a ticket because at the time it wasn't dangerous to travel by plane. She bought me a ticket and I flew to Washington, then from Washington I arrived in Boston and then to New Bedford. So I came to New Bedford in March of '99.

CW- When you were in Kentucky what were you doing?

I15- I wasn't working since I didn't plan to stay long it was just until my husband got the money together for my ticket because he spent a lot of money for my trip so he told me I had to wait until he got the money together. And he was living with a lot of his cousins and there was no room for a couple to live so that was his aim that he had to get a place ready for me to live in. So that is why I had to remain there for a few months, it was November, December, January February it was four months that I was there. But his friend treated me very well, she gave me meals and I helped her clean the house, she would go to work and I would have everything ready for her at home. She was very happy.

CW- What did she do for work?

(21:18) I15- She worked in a wood factory.

CW- A wood factory for furniture?

I15- Yes exactly- furniture. They would cut the wood from the trees, she would tell me about it because I couldn't go to see it.

CW- Is it in the country.

I15- Yes it is all country. My friend worked very hard too in the wood factory and she worked part-time at a Burger King cleaning out the grease in the restaurant and in the kitchen. She worked hard because she also had her children in Guatemala and her husband died and that is why she decided to come here. So thanks to that woman's help I was able to come here to New Bedford she bought my ticket and arranged it all.

CW- And you are still friends?

I15- We are still friends but lately it has been hard to get in touch because she has moved and her mother was very sick and she went back to her country. But now she is from here because she married someone from here so she got her papers thankfully. And I don't know much of her but I know that her mother was sick and she went back but I don't know much about her now because I tried to call her but her phone is disconnected so I don't know what is going on with

her. I would always be in touch with her but it has been about three months that I haven't spoken to her.

CW- So when you came to the United States you adjusted while you were with your friend, but when you came to New Bedford what did you think about the life over here?

I15-I thought it was very different here because there were a lot of Hispanics but in Glasgow there were not many Hispanics. There were more Americans I think because you wouldn't hear Spanish spoken very much in the street only with my friend. She said that people don't speak much Spanish here, When my husband would call he told me that here there were many Latinos and I was happy because in a way it was like a part of Guatemala because you would hear Spanish spoken everywhere.

CW-There are a lot of Guatemalans.

I15-There are a lot of Guatemalans , it made me happy and I was anxious to come to New Bedford. So I came to New Bedford and it was nice but I didn't imagine it was like this I thought it would be very different but I adapted.

CW- Was your house close to the sea what did you think of the sea and the coast?

(24:23) I15- I thought it was beautiful and thanks to God he gave us the sea and that is why we have work. Sometime I think when I go to the shore with my husband and I think "Oh Lord so many fish and thank God for them we have our jobs, how beautiful is the sea, it gives us a life and allows us to buy shoes, clothes-true? You can even buy a handbag to match your clothes, in my country you couldn't even buy a pair of shoes, and now (we have) all of those things. Here we feel very delighted. Our thoughts are that one day there may be a work permit or a TPS to make us feel safe. We don't come here to kill or harm anyone, we come simply with the purpose to work and hoping to God that he touches the heart of the people who can decide to give us a work permit so that we can also drive. It is difficult because you can't get a license to be able to drive a car, to drop off our kids at school because it is a problem if we can't catch a bus and we have to walk and we feel bad about that. And if God would touch the hearts of these people to allow to get a work permit in order to get a license and to have our own little car, so that we can work. We are working but at times it is hard to be asking people for rides, sometimes we take the bus. Now that I have my children and we have a car and someone did us the favor of registering it but you know we feel bad (*con pena*) you don't feel free, you are afraid but by the grace of God one day we will get a work permit because we don't want to harm anyone but we simply came to work.

CW-So when you first came, you went to live in an apartment alone with your husband in your first house?

I15- No we didn't live alone at first because we had a lot of bills that were expensive, so we lived with two of my husband's cousins.

CW- So now who lives at your house?

(27:02) I15- Now thankfully since I have my children not many people can live with us because the children are a problem, they make noise sometimes, other people can't live with us because the children jump and run.

CW- You have two boys- how old are they?

I15-One is five and the other is two and a half. And they are rambunctious! They are rambunctious and we can't live with other people, we tried but it caused problems when the boys would fight. And it is difficult to pay the rent with just us, we pay \$650 plus the bills, telephone, cable it is expensive but we realize that all that we didn't have we want to give to our children. It is difficult but we keep struggling little by little.

CW- Tell me about your first job? How did you get your first job?

I15- Well my husband worked there first and the wife of his cousin worked there, and because of her he got the job. And later when I came my husband spoke to his boss, and this boss was very good to us, and he told him "bring her, bring her". I went to clean cod at the table, to clean filets and at first we couldn't do it but little by little . Later they saw that I worked feverishly, we would work faster and the boss came and saw the effort we put into it and he tapped me on the shoulder and said "you are going to try packing." And I said (to myself) "Oh Lord, what if I can't do it, or maybe I am not doing things well and he is sending me to work on the other side " I thought quickly. Later I spoke to my husband and he said "no it's that for packer they need people to work quickly". So I said "thank God" I was happy, at first I was startled, I thought that they thought that I couldn't do it and that is why they were switching me. But no- he said (boss) "I want to see how you work packing and we will talk later." At that time we made \$5.25.

CW -\$5.25, so at first you were cleaning the fish ?

I15-Cleaning cod.

CW- Were they already filleted?

I15- Yes.

CW- So you were taking off skin?

I15- What we were taking off was a little ear. Just the little ears and then we would throw them on the belt. And later they would fall into a basket, and from there they would be puy in a tank and that is where the packers were to pack them.

CW- So you were cutting them?

I15-We were cleaning them, they were already cut, we just had to take off the little ear with a knife

CW- OK, yes they were already cut by a machine?

(30:04) I14-They were cut by a machine and there were filters too who would split them by hand and there were also machines .

CW- And it was only with cod?

I15- And fillet. There were two kinds of fillet- fillet, cod fillet and codfish cakes made from the backs of crab, we would stuff them to be sold ready-made . We did everything, So I was newly sent to work in packing and when I was packing the boss said "Well I am going to give you a 25 cent raise because you work so fast, and you are doing a good job."

CW- What year was that in?

I15-I don't remember the year exactly, but I was only cleaning a year and a half more than 11 years packing now, but I only worked cleaning for a year and a half. Because they saw that my work was good quality and they gave me a 25 cent raise and they sent me to be a packer, and I got a 25 cent raise which was a little bit but because I was from such a poor family it was good.

CW- What did your husband do?

I15-He works in receiving the fish. What the woman clean are thrown on the belt and from the belt it falls into a basket, so he takes the baskets and puts them in a tub, that is his job.

CW- Full of water?

I15-He loads the baskets. That has always been his job and he has always been there.

CW- So both of you have only worked at that company?

I15- Yes at that company.

CW- And how have things changed over the years?

I15- Well they say they have been buying less according to the sellers. The economy has been affecting the situation quite a bit. It's not like before when we would get out of work at 10 at night, when there was a lot of work.

CW- How many hours would you work back then?

I15- Sometimes 60, 70 hours.

CW- Really?

I15- We worked a lot. Working those hours we could help out our families and build our little house over there in Guatemala and buy a little land. But now with the economy we earn only enough to live on here for the rent and nothing more. Now work has been slow now we only work 30, 35, 43, 36 hours. It's unusual to work more but at Christmas we work 40 hours, 42, 43 but just during Christmas time. Work has slowed down a lot.

CW- So you were explain that work is slow now but it will pick up at Christmas, maybe Thanksgiving?

(33:06) I15- At Christmas or those days but it has been getting slow, and that is why I am taking a break because there is no work and they send us home for a day. Everyone gets one day that they have to stay home by rotation as we call it until it improves and then we will go back to working every day. When it is slow we work few hours and when it gets really slow we have to stay home for a day but we always have at least 30 hours.

CW- How many people work there?

I15-In my section there are more or less 15 of us, or 20. There are 9 packers.

CW- All women.

I15- All women and some men who shovel ice, load, weigh all scattered throughout, there are 20 in our section. In my husband's section there are about 50, those who are cleaning.

CW- 50 so in total?

(37:08) I15-In total there are 70 or 80 people more or less. But yes the company has been a blessing, since we have been there we have been treated well. We are working and we feel happy and we say that even though it is fewer hours it is enough for food and rent which are the most important, and that our children are in good health and although we are just making it on our pay we are ok.

CW-And what was it like to have your children here?

I15-When I first arrived I thought that I wouldn't be having children. What I wanted to do was to help my mother in Guatemala and I took care of myself for five years. But after five years I decided to have children because I was getting older and I was afraid that one day that would affect me and sooner or later I had to have my children. And so after being here six, five and a half years I decided to have my first son who is Daniel who is five years old. And later I made the decision to have all my children at once so I waited for him to grow a little bit and he turned three and a half when the other one was born, Logan who is two and a half, I have only two boys.

CW- Are you thinking of having more?

I15- I am thinking about having one more and that's all.

CW- J ust three.

I15-Just three, that is my decision if God gives that to me too. Now I can't send much money. I call my father because only he is living and regardless I can send him \$50 or \$25 because I also have a right to have a family-no? When I can I send it to him, but if not my brothers help him and that way we feel better about it. Now he is alone and he is very old. My siblings have grown and have made their lives. As you know we are not all good sons and daughters some have made their lives and washed their hands of him and look what happens? But others of us think differently and we decided to continue helping him.

CW- Always?

(36:01) I15- Always but some of my brothers, there are five fingers on a hand but they are not all the same. I learned that from other older people they tell me to stay strong and you have struggle a lot and God has helped you with your children and thankfully they are well. The little one doesn't talk very well and he is going to a program which has helped him a lot to talk and communicate better and now he talks a lot and he is learning a lot. I'm happy to be here in the United States.

CW- And if you would have stayed in Guatemala what would your life been like?

I15-Well if I would have gone on over there, my life would have stayed the same, I wouldn't have done anything with my life just continued to live in poverty, not having enough to eat. We ate beans every day, and sometimes there weren't even beans. Sometimes it was just a hot tortilla with a pinch of salt folded over and that is how we would eat. Not like here we have the opportunity to eat and buy food but over there you don't. Here sometimes you are given food but over there no, we wouldn't have had these possibilities, I would say that if I would stayed

over there my life would be much worse! And worse , because I would have never been able to help my mother.

CW- Does your husband help his family too?

I15-He also helps his mother. His father also died. That is the change-he has his mother and I have my father. His father died in the same month that my mother died. He had diabetes and he died and his mother is in Guatemala and he sends her money and helps her. He also has brothers here, God has opened doors for him too, God has blessed him too from all that he has given us, he has also been able to help his brothers too.

CW – You also built a little house over there in Guatemala?

I15- We built our little house, it's very small but at least we have somewhere as we like to say to drop dead! (laughs) That is what we are accustomed to say over there. So Thank God we did it, if we would have stayed there we would not have done anything. An at our house so much water would come in when it would rain, great big drops and gush of water we would have to move to one side so that the rain would fall on top of us, hopefully is wouldn't because the beds were made of wood and we would put up saw horses and we would hang a straw mat on top but we didn't even have blankets, we were so poor. For me it is hard (to remember) but I am very grateful to God, right when I was in the desert I knew I had to look for God because he has helped me so much. He looked after me in the desert, he allowed me to arrive at my friend's house in Glasgow, Kentucky, she was a good woman to me. I came here and my husband is such a gift to me, thank God. I am very grateful. My life has been hard (gets tearful) to even remember it, nevertheless we keep moving forward.

CW- You are always struggling and you have a nice family. A question- I explained that this study has to do with the fishing regulations, have you heard anything about this at work about government changes in the fisheries with the fishermen and all that?

(40:28) I15- Yes we heard a little bit that it was bad in fishing that they are not selling much and that has affected us. It's not like before we have heard that it has affected the fishermen and they are not able to go out continuously. We hear people talking about it but we don't know much about it because what we know is how to clean the fish. But yes we have heard that it is very bad for the fishermen and it has affected our company too. What we have heard is that the (fishing) trips are not like they used to be when the boats came in loaded with fish and now they say they bring in very little. They are going through a rough time and that is why it has affected our company and our families too.

CW- Do you know any fishermen? You work at a big company, does it also have its own boats as part of the company or do they just buy the fish?

(41:33) I15-They buy it, that what we have heard, we don't know but. Yes I have a friend who is Portuguese and her husband is a fisherman. He is Portuguese too. She says fishing is very bad, sometimes her husband stays home for a month without going out to sea. She has commented to me about this and that's why we have found out why work has been slow at our company.

CW- So you have already commented on this but do you feel that working in the fisheries has been something positive and good for you?

I15- It has been something that has been very good, very good. Thanks to the fish we have been able to get ahead. Thanks to all that.

CW- So there is nothing negative or to complain about?

I15- No, nothing. I simply feel very good working in the fisheries. And I am very grateful to the company. Well there are a lot of friends who work in the many different fish companies. I feel very good working in fisheries; I never lament "oh I am working in fisheries". And thankfully we have come here and we have come to know about all this that we never heard about in Guatemala. We didn't know anything about that.

CW- But when you were helping your mother wash cloths in the river you saw the little fishes?

I15- I saw the little fishes but I never imagined that I would come here to work with fish! We would pick up fish in baskets over there and because they were so tiny we would eat them with a lot of salt, we would dry them and eat them. But I never imagined that I would end up working in a fish company.

CW- Do you like fish?

I15-I like fish.

CW- Have you also learned how to prepare it too?

I15- The way we make it mostly is in the oven and we make it fried too.

CW- We are almost finished. Just one more question-you live with your husband and yor two children and both of you are working?

I15-We are both working and I leave the children with a babysitter. My youngest son doesn't go to school yet, the other one does so the babysitter drops him off and picks him up at school. I have the two children and sometimes I get out of work early and when I get out early I can pick up my some at school. When I can't the babysitter picks him up. Working in fisheries you see that there are days that there is a lot of fish and days there is nothing, it's like that-we say the work is crazy.

CW- The work is crazy.

(44:26) I15- That is what we say. There are days you go in at 7 AM other days at 8 AM we get out at 1 PM, 2PM or 3PM, we don't have steady hours but nevertheless we work at least 35 hours, 36 hours.

CW- Do you work directly for the company or do you work for a temp company?

I15-No I work directly for the company.

CW- Do you get vacations?

I15-We get vacations according to the years we have worked. I have been working twelve years and I have the right to three weeks of vacation.

CW- Three vacation weeks?

I15- Three weeks of paid vacation and we rest.

CW- So you rest and what else do you do when you are on vacation?

I15- We rest and take advantage of the time to spend with our kids, we go out to a park. We take the time to call our families; we help our boys study by reading books to them. Things that we are unable to do when we are working, we take advantage of the time off to do these things when we are on vacation.

CW- Does your husband help you out at home.

I15- We both help out at home. I cook when I come home from work and I pick up the kids because I get out of work a little earlier. And when he comes home I start cooking and he watches the kids. When he goes to wash up, I feed the kids so we take turns so that we can help each other out mutually. My husband is very good, God have given me a very good man.

CW- So he is not the kind on husband that...?

I15- Expects to be waited on with the food, no. He knows how to share things. We help each other out. Sometimes he reads to the kids because they send us notes from school to tell us that we need to read to our kids. Sometimes I tell my husband to write them a note to school that sometimes we don't have time but he says no, even if it is late. S Sometimes my son eats dinner and goes to bed early but we stay up until 11 PM. We try to get them to bed early after they eat so that he can be ready for school the next day. Those are the note they have sent us to tell us to send the children to bed early, so that they can be happy to listen to what the teacher says the next day.

CW- It seems your son likes books a lot.

I15-My son like books a lot. He is very intelligent, His teacher sent me a note to telling me that my son like to help other children in the class. When a child can't put on his sweater he helps him. I also give him the advice that when the teacher is speaking you have to pay attention, because you have to get ahead I tell him. Because I suffered so much and I tell him how my mother didn't have money. He says " then your mother didn't love you." At his age he can't understand yet. I say that my mother didn't buy me toys, and he says "because your mother didn't love you." But they are growing up and moving forward. He will understand later he only is five years old so it is hard for him to understand.

CW- What are your hopes for your two boys?

(47:42) I15- I want them to study and make something of their lives. My desire would be would be if they could be a translator at a hospital, or a doctor or a fireman. That is what I tell them and they laugh. My youngest that he wants to see the "woowoo" (siren) firemen. He can't explain that he wants to be a fireman so he says it like that. And Daniel says he wants to be a nose doctor because my oldest son has a lot of nosebleeds. And when I take him to be examined he says he wants to do that. To examine noses and to be a doctor. My desire is that they find healthy work. I am not going to force them to do one thing or another but that they know how to earn an honorable living. They should not be touching people's things, you need to ask. We are poor but we hold our heads high. And if they can get a ahead that's good and if not I won't force them. But my desire is that they study to become good men. That is what I talk to my husband about at night, that Daniel will be a doctor, it's a hope like all parents. Well these are our feelings but we don't know how they will grow up and what they will do. But they are our sons and whatever it is we need to support them.

CW- Well we have talked about a lot of things and in the future I would like to give you a disk (CD) of the interview that you can keep so that your boys can listen to it when they a bigger.

I15- It has been a pleasure to be in this interview, it was difficult and I get sad (gets tearful), I don't have my mother. I used to tell her " Mama, my son is going to turn one years old, Mama I want to buy him a birthday cake." Now it is my kid's birthdays and I don't have my mother, I know it is hard but I am moving forward and I want my children to move ahead too. And I thank you too to allow me to share these feelings. My past has been hard but at the same time God has given me a victory and I have gotten ahead. And I thank God for letting me get ahead. I don't know how long I will live, but I want to struggle for my children to give them a better life. They have been good sons. Thanks very much for this interview too to allow me to share my feelings with you.

CW- Thank you so much, it has been a great story to listen your experiences too. Thanks.

End (50:48)