



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**UKRAINE**

# SUCCESS STORY

## Trafficking Awareness Saves Lives

### A woman learns about trafficking and saves her sister

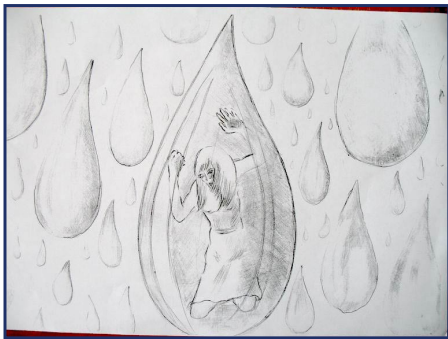


Photo: International Organization for Migration

This drawing was made by a victim of trafficking during a stay in a rehabilitation center.

***“My sister is back and alive. Now she is safe, feels good and works in Ukraine ... It’s good that I knew about the problem of trafficking and that Chayka exists. We were upset that Lena went abroad and didn’t tell us anything, but when she realized she was in trouble she called,” said Halyna, who attended seminars at Chayka, a member of a USAID-funded anti-trafficking network.***

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Halyna had just returned from a seminar about human trafficking held by Chayka, a local organization in Rivne, Ukraine, when her sister Lena called. Halyna had not heard from her in months — not since Lena had taken a job in Portugal. Halyna was relieved, but afraid of what the long silence may have meant.

Halyna’s worst fears were confirmed — Lena had never reached Portugal because she had been sold into a trafficking network. But she knew exactly where to go to help her sister return home and recover from the trauma: Chayka. As a member of a counter-trafficking network funded by USAID, Chayka educates people about trafficking and provides reintegration assistance to trafficking victims.

Lena’s traumatic experience began when a local woman told her about a job in Portugal. Lena jumped at the chance and followed the lead. But after she left, no one not heard from her. Her family contacted the police to report that Lena was missing and ask for help finding her. Meanwhile, Lena was taken to Poland, where her passport was confiscated and replaced with a false Polish passport. Two Polish men brought her to Germany, where they sold her to an Austrian drug dealer who forced her into prostitution and selling illegal drugs. After her physical and mental health deteriorated dramatically, she was unable to earn the profits expected of her. Luckily, she was set free.

Lena had tried to leave Austria without a passport and was sent to a migrant accommodation center. She was terrified and begged her sister to help her. Halyna knew from her recent training that Chayka would help. Working in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration and Rivne’s Counter-Trafficking Law Enforcement Unit, Chayka located Lena and helped arrange for her return to Ukraine. In Rivne, Halyna introduced her to Chayka, where she learned about the reintegration program for trafficking victims.

Lena’s health improved after spending time in the reintegration program, where she also received legal assistance and vocational training. Today Lena has a job in Rivne. She is happy to be back, and her family is grateful to have their Lena home, safe and sound.