



SUCCESS STORY

Hotline Protects Woman from Traffickers

Awareness campaign keeps woman safe from traffickers



Photo: Ukrainiska Reklama

A poster of Slava Vakarchuk, lead singer of the popular Ukrainian band Okean Elzy, urges youth to get more information before traveling abroad.

“Only now I realize how close I was to getting into trouble,” said Lyudmyla, a second-year law student in Rivne, northwestern Ukraine.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Lyudmyla, a second-year law student, attended a seminar on trafficking in persons held at her university. During the workshop, the organizers — Chayka, an organization based in Rivne, northwestern Ukraine — explained all the aspects of trafficking, including how to avoid traps that traffickers set, and advertised its hotline, which offers advice to people who are considering going abroad on how to protect themselves.

Chayka is part of a counter-trafficking network financed by USAID. In addition to educating people in the Rivne oblast about trafficking, Chayka provides reintegration assistance to returned victims of trafficking.

Lyudmyla was looking for a job to pay for her education and living costs. While searching, she found an employment agency that offered her a job in the Czech Republic at a higher pay level than similar jobs in Ukraine. Lyudmyla was interested. The agency required her to sign a contract in the Czech language stating that the agency would pass her power of attorney to an unknown man, who would act on her behalf in the Czech Republic. The agency also said that she could reimburse the cost for its services after she began working in the Czech Republic.

Some of these things seemed suspicious to Lyudmyla. Remembering what she had heard at the trafficking education seminar, she decided to call Chayka’s hotline to get advice about this job offer. A Chayka attorney met with Lyudmyla, and after discussing the situation, the two concluded that this offer might be a risky one. Lyudmyla decided to reject the Czech job offer.

Looking back, Lyudmyla says, “Thanks to the seminar I attended at the university, I knew where to go to get a consultation. Only now I realize how close I was to getting into trouble. I’m happy that Chayka helped me. Now I will try to find a job in Ukraine to pay for my university studies.”