# IMPACT REPORT 2022

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A21 is a global counter-trafficking nongovernmental organisation (NGO) dedicated to abolishing slavery everywhere, forever. Modern-day slavery is one of the fastest-growing transnational organised crimes, with estimates between 27 and 50 million people enslaved in the world today. A21’s holistic approach to eradicating modern-day slavery implements a trifold strategy with proven results. All A21 programs and resources focus on reducing vulnerability through prevention and awareness; increasing intervention through professional training, hotlines and child advocacy centres; and empowering survivors with comprehensive aftercare services and access to justice through legal assistance. This ‘Year in Review’ highlights A21’s response to the unique impact of the war in Ukraine and observations of emerging trends, in addition to A21’s global prevention and awareness, identification and intervention, and aftercare efforts throughout 2022.

A21 has offices in 19 locations in 14 countries, including Australia, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Denmark, Greece, Mexico, Norway, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US). A21 also operates human trafficking hotlines nationally in Bulgaria, Greece and South Africa (collectively, the ‘A21 Hotlines’). A21’s robust programs aim to combat human trafficking comprehensively, focusing on vulnerable groups, individuals currently being victimised (both knowingly and unknowingly), and survivors who have exited their exploitative circumstances. While fundamental principles underlie all human trafficking situations, such as the use of some derivation of force, fraud or coercion, or the exploitation of a child, the types of human trafficking and exploitation in each country often contain differences by region, reflecting the varied vulnerabilities and social issues unique to each country.
EMERGING GLOBAL TRENDS

The unique on-the-ground and global perspectives of A21 continue to allow the organisation to identify emerging trends. A21 observed one of 2022’s main trends involved recruitment through false jobs, both online and offline. Another trend observed by many of A21’s offices involved increased efforts across the board to combat labour trafficking. Most of A21’s offices also reported an increase in the intake of male survivors in its Aftercare Program, likely in part due to increased focus on labour trafficking as well as the effect of other newer trafficking trends, program focus and the expansion of its referral network.

Following the lifting of many COVID-19 restrictions in 2022, the A21 Hotlines observed an increase in the identification of foreign national trafficking victims of false job opportunities and promises, accounting for the most common recruitment method recorded by all three A21 Hotlines. Statements from survivors entering A21’s Aftercare Program in 2022 also supported false job opportunities and promises as the primary recruitment method into trafficking, at twice the rate of other methods. Many survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program, financially responsible for supporting their families, acknowledged economic hardship as a critical factor in their ultimate recruitment as traffickers exploited this financial need through false job postings. Interestingly, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) observed a global economic impact resulting from the ‘cost-of-living crisis, tightening financial conditions in most regions, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and the lingering COVID-19 pandemic’.

The growing use of the internet by traffickers to recruit victims through false job opportunities is a trend A21 has observed across different regions. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) noted a general increase in the global use of the internet by traffickers, including to advertise false job opportunities. In particular, some A21 offices have observed the emergence of victims trafficked to scamming centres recruited via false online job advertisements. Furthermore, A21 offices have started to notice an increase in a type of trafficking recruitment which A21 terms ‘liberators/benefactors’. This type of recruitment occurs when a perpetrator approaches someone either already in an exploitative situation or vulnerable due to extreme hardship, with the promise of assistance, only to exploit them. In these cases, individuals already living in precarious situations (often children) are deceived into believing their perceived liberator/benefactor will help when they set out only to harm. Recruitment by ‘liberators’ can be used to retraffick victims who believe they will be exiting an exploitative situation. Perceived ‘benefactors’ may target highly vulnerable communities, such as orphans or refugees, who may be quick to accept any offer of assistance. In both cases, desperate situations place these individuals in vulnerable situations with limited choices for survival. For victims with complex trauma, exploitation from a perceived ‘liberator/benefactor’ can further hinder their already lowered threshold of trust, interfering with their ability to trust others, including law enforcement and aftercare service providers.

A21’S RESPONSE TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE

A21 applies a tailored approach to creating and applying its counter-trafficking strategy, as seen in A21’s immediate response to the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation (‘Russia’), ongoing since February 2022. While navigating the displacement of its Ukrainian staff, A21 had to also address the large-scale potential for human trafficking due to over 7.8 million refugees fleeing Ukraine at one point in the war. A21 offices in Bulgaria, Greece and Spain, as well as the Ukrainian staff working from Poland, actively engaged in raising awareness about human trafficking, potentially reaching millions of people through radio, podcasts, comic books, print and social media, awareness billboards and strategic partnerships, to help safeguard vulnerable populations, including refugees and internationally displaced persons. The Ukrainian staff also worked to provide specialised training on human trafficking to organisations specifically tasked with responding to the Ukrainian refugee crisis. Moreover, as refugees themselves, the A21 Ukraine staff provided cultural context in their trainings. (See the Ukraine Impact Report for a full summary of A21’s response to the war in Ukraine.)
PREVENTION AND AWARENESS

A21 focuses on preventing human trafficking through strategic awareness and prevention efforts targeted at vulnerable groups, as well as the general public, adults and minors in rural, suburban, and urban communities across the world who experience and are vulnerable to human trafficking (see Appendix A). All of A21’s prevention and awareness programs, education curricula, and professional development training for educators aim to safeguard those vulnerable to human trafficking. A21’s prevention and awareness impact from 2022 resulted in reaching millions of people worldwide with programs, resources, and videos, both online and offline. In 2022, A21 created new resources for children ages 3-6, comic books, a digital safety computer game in Thailand and Cambodia, piloted a new K-12 Human Trafficking Education Curriculum in the United States, and a Can You See Me? (CYSM) public awareness campaign in Bulgaria. Using these new and existing resources, A21 had a potential reach of over 2 billion people, with a confirmed reach of over 1.6 million people, including 511,524 people (adults: 264,670; minors: 246,854) with prevention programs and resources; 971,177 people (adults: 33,660; minors 996,643) through awareness programs and presentations; and 174,913 people (adults 14,619; minors 160,294) with educational curriculum and parent guides.

IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION

A21 facilitates programs focused on intervention and identification of potential victims of trafficking, often through partnerships and active support of government efforts, as well as facilitating access to justice through its Legal Assistance Program for survivors receiving direct aftercare services from A21 (see Appendix B). In 2022, the A21 Hotlines received 6,135 telephone and online contacts, resulting in the identification and/or assistance of 159 victims of trafficking. Over three-quarters of the contacts to A21’s Hotlines in 2022 related directly to human trafficking, with the general public responsible for the highest percentage of these contacts. A21 conducted 162 training sessions in 2022, equipping 5,155 professionals to recognise and appropriately respond to human trafficking in their work. A21 also conducted 395 human trafficking screenings resulting in the identification of 224 victims. These survivors were then referred either to A21’s Aftercare Program or partner care. In addition, trusted NGOs, law enforcement and government partners have referred potential victims to A21 for identification and assistance. Finally, 157 survivors engaged in A21’s Legal Assistance Program to receive support in the criminal prosecution of their perpetrators and/or their civil legal proceedings. As a result, 28 defendants were sentenced to a combined 232 years and collectively $134,508.79 in compensation and fines.

AFTERCARE

A21 offers a trauma-informed, survivor-centred aftercare program to survivors of human trafficking in Bulgaria, Cambodia, Greece, South Africa, Thailand, Ukraine and the United States (see Appendix C). A21’s Aftercare Program receives referrals of survivors needing direct services through A21’s Hotlines and Child Advocacy Centres, local law enforcement and partner organisations. In 2022, 227 survivors entered A21’s Aftercare Program, for 435 survivors assisted throughout the year. The primary form of trafficking experienced by survivors entering the program was sexual exploitation (51.1%), followed by forced labour (22.4%). Since its inception in 2008, A21 has welcomed survivors from 80 nations. In 2022, A21 supported 45 domestic relocations and 41 international repatriations, accounting for 100% of those requiring A21 Survivor Relocation Services (A21 SRS). As false job opportunities were the primary recruitment method (28.6%) seen in 2022, aftercare services focused on job readiness and safety, resulting in 107 survivors finding new employment. A21 remains committed to continuing its efforts to combat human trafficking and exploitation online and offline worldwide. The enormity of the issue requires continued multidisciplinary collaboration between diverse government sectors, including law enforcement and prosecutors, NGOs, the education system, private businesses, tech industries and the general public.

ENDNOTES

2 For detailed descriptions of the programs comprising A21’s Reach, Rescue and Restore operational strategies, please see Appendices A, B and C.
ABOUT THE BULGARIAN NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

The Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline (The Hotline) is a dedicated service that supports victims of human trafficking and provides advice and assistance on human trafficking issues to the general public. A21 Bulgaria officially launched the Hotline in 2015 in partnership with the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The Hotline is the only resource in Bulgaria committed to solely handling human trafficking reports 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Trained call specialists are equipped to handle calls in over 230 languages through a tele-interpretation service. As Bulgaria continues to be one of the primary source countries of human trafficking in the EU, the Hotline receives a high proportion of reports regarding potential victims of trafficking located outside of Bulgaria. Therefore, the Hotline’s trained call specialists work in close partnership with both Bulgarian national institutions and those in other EU nations to respond quickly and effectively to each report.

‘I will always be grateful for what you have done for me and my family.’

—Survivor Recovered After Calling the Hotline

OVERVIEW OF DATA²

The Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline receives reports via phone, email, text, and the dedicated Hotline website (www.080020100.bg). In 2022, the Hotline received 1,071 contacts, 35% more than the previous year. This increase may in part be a result of improved awareness campaigns of the Hotline and its services, including promoting the Hotline at in-person presentations and trainings which resumed after the government lifted COVID-19 restrictions. The majority (69.9%) of contacts to the Hotline were human trafficking related. The number of online contacts to the Hotline continues to increase (up by 243.7% since 2020) but still only accounts for 5.1% of the total contacts made to the Hotline.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

• The Hotline received a total of 1,071 CONTACTS

• The Hotline identified and/or assisted 42 VICTIMS of trafficking

• The majority of potential victims reported to the Hotline were FEMALE (69.1%)

• ADULTS (90.1%) comprised the majority of potential victims reported to the Hotline.

• The majority of potential victims reported to the Hotline were BULGARIAN (89%)

• The most common recruitment method in cases reported to the Hotline was FALSE JOB OPPORTUNITIES (43.2%)

• The Hotline team submitted 32 POLICE REPORTS

• There were 44% more JOB VETTING REQUESTS in 2022 than in 2021

• The majority of victims reported to the hotline were victims of either LABOUR EXPLOITATION (37%) or SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (38.8%)

Contacts to the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline comprise all incoming enquiries to the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline through any means, including but not limited to phone calls, emails, SMS and online web submissions. These enquiries include all reports on potential human trafficking, various crimes both related and unrelated to human trafficking, and queries about human trafficking generally, as well as requests for various types of assistance related to human trafficking, such as safety planning or job vetting.

‘Reports’ only include contacts to the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline relating to a potential human trafficking situation.

The statistics below are exclusively drawn from substantive contacts made to the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline from January - December 2022 concerning human trafficking matters. This report is not a reflection of all substantive calls to the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline which may include calls related to other high-risk crimes, labour exploitation and other non-trafficking issues.

Disaggregated data has been collected on each individual case based on descriptive factors including gender, age, type of trafficking, methods of control and recruitment methods. The data contained herein is based on the cases where the information was available. In the majority of cases, the call specialists were unable to glean full or specific details about the case. The data contained herein is based on cases where the specified information was made available.
CALLER DEMOGRAPHICS
Since its inception in 2015, the Hotline has received reports from potential victims, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), law enforcement, frontline professionals and the general public. In 2022, the majority of contacts to the Hotline (61.6%) originated from the general public. These contacts include concerned friends and family members of potential victims and witnesses of suspicious activity from within the community. The significance and success of A21’s efforts in promoting the Hotline to the community are demonstrated in this consistently high number of contacts from the general public. Although potential victims of trafficking only account for 9% of contacts to the Hotline, these contacts generated 26% of the cases related to a confirmed human trafficking victim.

VICTIM DEMOGRAPHICS
In 2022, the Hotline successfully identified and/or assisted 42 victims of trafficking, 25 of whom subsequently entered A21’s Aftercare Program for support throughout their recovery. This support included international repatriation services for eight survivors as well as national relocation for 11 survivors.

AGE AND GENDER
Females comprised 69.1% of the potential victims reported to the Hotline, with males constituting the remaining 30.9%. While the percentage of potential male victims reported to the Hotline has decreased since 2021, this number is still significantly higher than the 6.9% of reported male victims in 2020.

In 2022, the Hotline received nine times more cases involving adults compared to minors. This ongoing trend of higher adult cases is not surprising as cases related to minors are normally reported to the State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) Hotline in Bulgaria. For any cases involving minors, the Hotline works with the SACP to appropriately support the minor.

‘I am happy for you, that you are dedicated and want to help women, men, and children in need. God bless you for your good work.’
—A Hotline Caller
VICTIM NATIONALITY
Eighty-nine percent of potential victims reported to the Hotline in 2022 were Bulgarian nationals; of these, 11.1% were Bulgarian nationals of Roma ethnic origin. While this follows the year-on-year trend that Bulgarians constitute the majority of potential victims reported, Hotline data reveals a significant decrease in reports of Roma potential victims from 54.4% in 2021 to 11.1% in 2022. The high number of Bulgarian potential victims may be due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has increased unemployment in Bulgaria, thus making Bulgarian nationals more vulnerable to exploitation.

The remaining 11% of potential victims were foreign nationals, with Turkish and Ukrainian being the most prevalent. While this number remains low, the number of reported cases involving foreign nationals has increased by 233% since 2021 with the reopening of borders post-pandemic.

EXPLOITATION TYPE
In 2022, 37% of victims reported to the Hotline experienced labour exploitation, and 38.3% experienced sexual exploitation. Although this reflects an increase in cases involving sexual exploitation since 2021, this is still significantly lower than in 2020, when sexual exploitation comprised 86.2% of reported cases. Interestingly, in 2022, the Hotline addressed misconceptions of trafficking being limited to the sexual exploitation of women during their promotion of the Hotline’s services on an employment website. In addition, as many Bulgarians lost their jobs as a result of COVID-19, many sought new jobs abroad.

RECRUITMENT METHODS
Perpetrators of human trafficking use certain recruitment methods to deceive and coerce victims into situations of exploitation. These methods vary from the ‘loverboy’ method to false promises to being sold by a family member. Throughout 2022, the leading recruitment method used by perpetrators was through false job opportunities, constituting 43.2% of cases reported to the Hotline. The most consistent prevalent recruitment method over the past three years have been false job opportunities; this is likely because Bulgaria has the lowest GDP in Europe, sitting at 43% lower than the rest of the EU, making Bulgarian nationals more vulnerable to exploitation.

Consistent with the Hotline’s 2021 report, the Hotline identified the ‘loverboy’ method, a scheme involving grooming and manipulating a victim into a false romantic relationship to exploit them, as the next main type of recruitment method. This was the primary method of recruitment in 28.4% of cases.

Other methods used in cases reported to the Hotline include false promises, where perpetrators promise the victim a better life (6.2%), abduction (3.7%) and being sold by a family member (3.7%).

As part of its effort to curtail those being recruited through false job opportunities, the Hotline offers A21’s Job Vetting Program, a service that screens employment opportunities. Under the Job Vetting Program, call specialists provide guidance on safely seeking employment to callers inquiring about the validity of certain job postings. In 2022, the Hotline advertised this service on Bulgaria’s largest job search website, www.jobs.bg, and in Facebook groups focused on international employment opportunities. After advertising this service, ‘job vetting’ requests increased by 44% from the previous year. Notably, while screening these employment opportunities, call specialists identified a suspicious job in over half of the requests submitted during the reporting year (53.8%). Most job vetting requests involved employment opportunities abroad, primarily in Germany or the Netherlands.
METHODS OF CONTROL
To keep victims in exploitative situations, traffickers use various methods of control involving manipulation and coercion. The methods of control used in cases reported to the Hotline include threats, isolation, emotional, physical, sexual, or economic abuse, forced substance misuse, and the destruction or withholding of personal identification documents. Victims of human trafficking often experience multiple methods of control to keep them in exploitative situations. Reports to the Hotline in 2022 support economic abuse as the most common method of control, used in nearly 25% of cases reported to the Hotline; this includes withholding of wages or debt bondage. The Hotline also identified both physical (17%) and emotional (16.3%) abuse as common methods of control used by traffickers in reported cases.

PERPETRATOR DEMOGRAPHICS
The perpetrator’s nationality is often unknown in a significant proportion of cases reported to the Hotline (30.9%). However, in cases where the suspected trafficker’s nationality is reported, the most common nationality was Bulgarian (34.6%), followed by Bulgarian Roma (28.4%). Other nationalities reported include Turkish, Kuwaiti, and Estonian.

In October 2022, A21 Bulgaria launched the Can You See Me? (CYSM) public awareness campaign in Bulgaria. A21’s CYSM campaign is a global public awareness campaign designed to educate viewers to recognise and report possible human trafficking to the appropriate hotline, which in Bulgaria is operated by A21. The CYSM campaign in Bulgaria depicts common labour and sexually exploitative situations encountered by Bulgarians. Through film, imagery and audio, the recipient is made aware of these common types of exploitative situations, along with a means of reporting their suspicions or requesting assistance through the advertisement of the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline number. The CYSM campaign reached a potential 4.2 million people in Bulgaria through billboards along main roads, metro station television screens, airport television screens, as well as national radio. Within weeks of the launch, the Hotline received reports of suspected trafficking as a direct result of the CYSM campaign, including the identification and extraction of a family being trafficked for labour. After the successful launch of the CYSM campaign, the number of contacts to the Hotline in November and December 2022 increased by 102% compared to the same period in 2021.
HIGHLIGHTS

The survivors in each of these cases courageously took steps to escape and, against all odds, are now free.

TRAFFICKING VICTIM SELF-IDENTIFIES AFTER HEARING CYSM RADIO CAMPAIGN

As a direct result of A21’s Can You See Me? public awareness campaign in Bulgaria, a family of four was discovered and recovered from exploitation. The parents had been victims of labour trafficking for seven years. Although the children themselves were not trafficked, they were subject to the same living conditions as their parents - living without electricity or heating for the last five years. The father heard the CYSM? campaign and the advertised Hotline number on a small radio he had access to, with limited stations, including the National Radio Station. The father was extremely hesitant to call the Hotline as he had previously unsuccessfully attempted to escape. On that prior occasion, the trafficker had beaten and threatened him. However, despite his initial fears, the father, after thinking through options, summoned enough courage to call the Hotline. The Hotline call specialists worked closely with the police, coordinating to safely extract the whole family. The family is now safe, and the father has since called the Hotline to thank them for their assistance. The entire family has entered A21’s Aftercare Program, where A21 caseworkers are assisting them obtain new identification documents, rebuild their lives and enrol the children in school.

HOTLINE SECURES HOUSING FOR SURVIVOR OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The Hotline received a call from a physician regarding a woman who had experienced years of sexual exploitation before escaping from her trafficker. The victim had been recruited via the ‘loverboy’ method, by a man she met whilst visiting another city. Soon thereafter, he began to sexually exploit her, controlling her through both physical and emotional abuse. The trafficker withheld her identification documents and at one point transported her to another country. Eventually, she escaped from her trafficker. However, while now physically free, she found herself homeless. After a few days, a member of the public saw her and called the police for assistance, who in turn contacted an ambulance for medical assistance.

Upon meeting and examining the survivor, a physician called the Hotline for assistance. Within three hours of receiving this report, the Hotline call specialists procured safe accommodation for the survivor. The survivor then entered the A21 Aftercare Program where she is receiving assistance to support her recovery, including care packages, access to medical care, and support from her caseworker, amongst other services.
FOREIGN NATIONAL ESCAPES DOMESTIC SERVITUDE IN BULGARIA

The Hotline received a call from a man providing shelter to a woman who had escaped domestic servitude. The woman had travelled to Bulgaria with her ‘employer’ under the impression that she would be employed as a housekeeper for his family. Instead, she was trafficked and forced to work up to 20 hours a day upon arrival. Her trafficker withheld her identification documents, emotionally abused her and left her without any food. She became isolated as she was no longer able to contact any family or friends.

The woman managed one day to successfully access the internet, and find community members willing to assist her. Working with these community members, she courageously decided to escape, and did so successfully. She first ran to the nearest police station, and then connected with those community contacts who provided her with temporary housing. Once safe, she called the Hotline for assistance in finding permanent housing and retrieving her identification documents. She now has a safe place to live and is receiving support in the A21 Aftercare Program.

ENDNOTES
2 To ensure data integrity, the data presented is extracted from reports submitted to the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline consisting of those identified as victims and likely potential victims of trafficking. This report takes a conservative approach in presenting Hotline data and analysis, omitting reports of potential victims of human trafficking which were unable to be minimally substantiated.
4 Threats include threats of harm to the victim, their family or other individuals; to the victim’s reputation; or to report them to the police, immigration authorities or other government authorities.
5 Isolation may include physical isolation or deprivation of liberty, denying access to medical support, surveillance or control of the victim in public, and isolating the victim by moving them frequently from place to place.
6 Economic abuse includes situations of debt bondage or where traffickers limit the victim’s finances either in whole or in part.

As a service situated to support those in exploitative situations, the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline is at the forefront of understanding emerging human trafficking trends in Bulgaria. Each year the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline commits to expanding its networks and partners across Bulgaria to ensure that an accurate scope of trafficking is reflected in the data collected. The Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline welcomes new partners interested in counter-human trafficking efforts in Bulgaria. Partnerships are vital not only to provide services to identified trafficking survivors and communities requesting training, but also to increase awareness about the services provided by the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline across Bulgaria.

0800 20 100
NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

info@080020100.bg www.080020100.bg

The observations contained in this report are limited to information communicated to the Bulgarian National Human Trafficking Hotline during the reporting period. Nothing arising from the data should be interpreted as showing the full extent or prevalence of human trafficking in Bulgaria.
The Kingdom of Cambodia (‘Cambodia’) is situated within South-east Asia, bordering Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. Cambodia has a population of just over 16.5 million people, almost doubling within the last 30 years. Although Cambodia is considered a lower-middle-income country with almost 18% of the population living in poverty (less than US$2.7/day), the nation continues to see positive economic growth heading towards upper-middle-income by 2030. Cambodia’s economic status and proximity to wealthier nations makes it a prime source and destination country for all forms of human trafficking, with all 25 of Cambodia’s provinces to be known sources for trafficking. Cambodian nationals continue to be trafficked for forced labour, sexual exploitation, forced begging, forced marriage, and domestic servitude, both domestically and abroad. This mirrors the current trends within Southeast Asia showing that domestic trafficking is the main source of trafficking, followed by intra-regional trafficking. Traffickers often target children, persons with disabilities and undocumented migrant communities as well.

FINANCIAL STRESS INCREASES RECRUITMENT FROM FALSE JOBS AND PROMISES OF MARRIAGE

The pandemic affected migration patterns and disrupted tourism, business and other sectors in 2020. However, post-COVID-19, Cambodia’s borders have reopened and labour migration has resumed. This has placed some vulnerable groups at greater risk of trafficking than in previous years, due to financial stress caused during the COVID-19 pandemic. Vulnerable groups remain particularly at risk to labour trafficking. Most Cambodian migrant workers seek work outside of the country due to a lack of employment opportunities, high indebtedness and significant wage differentials. Thailand is the primary destination country for Cambodian migrant workers, with workers commonly working in the fishing, agriculture, livestock, construction, manufacturing and service sectors, including domestic work. Undocumented border crossings to Thailand are prevalent, with continued reports of border guards arresting migrants who cross the border without the appropriate identification. Consistent with these reports, A21 Cambodia (‘A21’) observed an increase in forced labour cases in 2022, with 15% of cases resulting from false job opportunities. In fact, 16 survivors supported by A21 had been trafficked to neighbouring nations. Ultimately, A21 assisted 12 of those 16 survivors with repatriation back to Cambodia.

Cambodia has increased the 2023 minimum wage to $200 USD per month for workers in the country’s garment, footwear and travel goods sector. The Cambodian economy faces new challenges of higher inflation, and downturn in a global economy, which raises concerns on the drag on the economy if borrowers struggle to meet repayments. Challenges faced with societal and personal economic status have the potential to contribute to people being vulnerable to trafficking and potentially lured by attractive, false job opportunities advertised online. This vulnerability of poverty and economic insecurity are major contributing factors to the increasing trend of trafficking for forced marriage. This is where traffickers recruit women and sometimes girls from rural areas under the false pretence of travelling to neighbouring nations for marriage or to be illegal surrogates.

Victims of trafficking for forced marriage are vulnerable to domestic servitude, forced labour in factories, sex trafficking, as well as debt bondage, where victims ultimately owe thousands of dollars to the brokers or families facilitating the transaction. Traffickers and brokers (essentially recruiters) will sometimes offer between $1,500 and $3,000 to families to send their daughters abroad for marriage. It is evident that post-COVID-19 economic issues in the region have resulted in an increase in labour trafficking and forced marriages, with victims being lured in with false jobs and false promises (or marriage). In 2022, A21 supported ten survivors who had been trafficked abroad for marriage, consistent with 2021.

A21’S RESPONSE

In 2022, the United States Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report) downgraded Cambodia from Tier 2 Watch List to Tier 3. This downgrade implies that the Cambodian Government is neither fully meeting minimum standards to combat human trafficking, nor making significant efforts to do so. Since
the release of the TIP Report, A21 has continued to take an active role in supporting the Cambodian Government’s response to human trafficking issues. As a trusted nongovernmental organisation (NGO) partner, A21 has worked with the Cambodian government to respond to the increased reports of trafficking, ensure the safe extraction of potential victims from their trafficking situations and provide the necessary support for their recovery from the trauma. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior and Director of the National Committee for Counter Trafficking (NCCT) Samdech Krolahom Sar Kheng recognised A21 Cambodia’s anti-trafficking efforts during a national Government event in April 2022 by presenting an award with the inscription, ‘To A21 for your invaluable empathy, inspiration, and humanitarian [sic] toward our people, especially during the COVID-19 crisis’.

**PREVENTION & AWARENESS**

A21 Cambodia predominantly focuses its prevention and awareness efforts on vulnerable groups, including disadvantaged and rural communities, street children and schools, as well as equipping partner organisations. The National Committee for Counter Trafficking (NCCT) and its Secretariat coordinated anti-trafficking activities, continued to implement a 2019-2023 national anti-trafficking action plan and initiated a mid-year review of the action plan to evaluate its achievements and remaining challenges. A21 in partnership with the government maintained prevention efforts by disseminating information about trafficking laws, safe migration, child rights, and strategies to prevent and report trafficking to vulnerable communities and the general population.

In 2022, A21 reached more than 29,000 people directly through prevention resources (20,891 children; 8,179 adults). More than 21,500 awareness campaign and materials from A21 were distributed across the country, reaching 41,972 people (202 children; 41,770 adults). After the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, A21 facilitated 149 events and conducted facilitator training workshops with 187 professionals who work with children and youth. The overall potential impact of A21’s reach exceeded 1.72 million people in 2022.

**3,355 CHILDRENS REACHED WITH A21’S PRIMARY PREVENTION PROGRAM (PPP)**

Children under the age of 13 years old constitute the majority of survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program. As part of A21’s preventative response to minors being trafficked, over 72% of its efforts have been targeted at children and young people, with additional focus on children who are homeless, lack family and social support, live in low-income communities, on the street or in forced begging situations. A21 staff also work in remote areas where parents are migrants and must leave their children at home with grandparents or siblings, when they cross the border for work. One of A21’s core programs is the Primary Prevention Program (PPP) which is a three-session prevention program designed for children ages 6-12 that can be facilitated in community and school settings. It aims to address identified risk factors to reduce vulnerability and protect children from human trafficking. In 2022, A21 reached 3,355 children with the PPP and trained 111 professionals with the accompanying facilitator ‘Train the Trainer’ program.

**RAISING AWARENESS WITH A21’S TUK-TUK CAMPAIGN**

‘Child sex tourism’ remains a concern in the Siem Reap region, with perpetrators predominantly Cambodian men travelling from other provinces within the nation to Siem Reap to sexually exploit children. However, people from all over parts of Asia, Australia, Europe, Africa and North America also travel to the region to sexually exploit children. This form of abuse was declining due to COVID-19 travel restrictions halting tourism, however, with the reopening of borders post-pandemic, it remains a concern for Cambodia, and in particular Siem Reap province as tourism regains momentum. To address this, A21 in partnership with the Provincial Committee for Counter Trafficking (PCCT) launched a human trafficking awareness Tuk-Tuk campaign in Siem Reap City, at the end of 2021. Tuk-tuks are the most common form of transportation for both locals and tourists in Siem Reap City. This campaign used advertisements on tuk-tuks aimed to educate the community about the reality of human trafficking, highlight the risks, and promote the national hotline. Throughout 2022, the tuk-tuks remained active throughout Siem Reap city reaching over 50,000 people. Furthermore, A21 conducted general trafficking awareness and identification training sessions for tuk-tuk drivers once a quarter throughout 2022.
PILOTING AN INNOVATIVE STRATEGY TO REACH STUDENTS - THE EVAC COMPUTER GAME

As technology advances and access to digital devices expands, so does the increase of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) and the distribution of child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, this is not only a global trend, but a trend that A21 is seeing locally in the region. In response to the growing need to address OCSE and online recruitment of children, A21, in partnership with The University of Kent, ECPAT International, PlayerThree Games and the University of Stirling developed a digital game, as part of the End Violence Against Children (EVAC) grant project. The EVAC Computer Game titled ‘May and Bay: A serious game for a serious issue: combating online child sexual exploitation and trafficking via a digital game’ is designed for children aged 8-14, using age-appropriate tools to educate children about online safety, and is contextualised specifically for Cambodia and Thailand. In 2022, A21 piloted the game with 827 students, conducting 15 workshops across 6 primary schools and Community Learning Centres in Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey. The game has been received extremely well by children and educators, resulting in the expansion of the program within existing and new partnerships. Participating children have expressed excitement and increased understanding of the content and a desire for continued learning.

IDENTIFICATION & INTERVENTION

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRE INCREASES VICTIM IDENTIFICATION

A21 partners with the Government of Cambodia and local authorities to secure freedom for victims of trafficking and the conviction of perpetrators through A21’s Child Advocacy Centre (CAC), frontline professional training and legal assistance. In previous years, A21’s identification, intervention and restoration programs focused only on Cambodian victims identified in Cambodia and abroad. However, in 2022, A21 provided support for victims of different nationalities, including Thai, Vietnamese, and Bangladeshi, due to changes in trafficking trends in the region, mostly related to the growing presence of entertainment establishments and other commercial enterprises during the pandemic.

A21 launched Cambodia’s first-ever (CAC) in 2019 to offer a victim-centred approach specifically tailored to children’s unique characteristics and challenges. The CAC has since developed into a cornerstone for safeguarding children in the Siem Reap region, resulting in more victims being processed through the centre and referred to A21’s Aftercare Program. Forensic interviewing conducted via the CAC model increased by 31.25% in 2022. In 2022, the total number of potential victims screened through the CAC program increased by 107.41% and the total number of victims identified through A21’s support almost tripled. This increase is likely the result of A21’s continued partnership with the Cambodian government, the coordinated efforts to identify individuals victimised by all forms of trafficking, and the increase in frontline professionals trained by A21 in 2022. Due to the increase of victims identified through A21’s programs, the number of victims entering its Aftercare Program has increased by 66.67% in 2022 compared to 2021.

WALK FOR FREEDOM

One of the most significant developments in A21’s Cambodia’s human trafficking awareness efforts during 2022, was the official launch of A21’s first ever Walk for Freedom (WFF) in Cambodia, in partnership with the National and Provincial Committee for Counter Trafficking. Siem Reap City took the lead in launching the walk with 600 participants from government ministries, including the education and law enforcement sectors, NGO partners, and community members. The WFF reached thousands through online awareness, government media channels and local newspaper articles.
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

A21 also works alongside law enforcement and government agencies to provide training. In 2022, A21’s collaborative public sector partnerships resulted in 827 civil society, government agency, and other frontline professionals receiving professional, specialised training. The training focused on improving interviewing skills and interactions with child-survivors, including the need to consider the critical stages of a child’s development during interactions. This specialised training also includes: employing a trauma-informed, child-centred approach; the importance of a child forensic interview; and creating a child-friendly environment. Training was conducted across multiple provinces, including Siem Reap, Beantey Meachey and Battambang Province. This training is fundamental to ensure that frontline professionals understand and apply a victim-centred approach to safeguard the identification process and support identified survivors. Additionally, these sessions also train frontline workers to create effective prevention programs and assist in any ensuing criminal prosecution. In one training for frontline professionals, a pre-survey determined that only three out of 30 police officers had previous training on human trafficking and victim identification. Trained government officials have since been able to apply this training to their work throughout 2022, as evidenced by the increase in the number of identified victims of trafficking.

In addition to providing formal training, A21 staff, through their daily interactions, strived to demonstrate a working model of employing a victim-centred approach. In 2022, A21 staff observed law enforcement utilising child-friendly interview techniques while conducting operations. Law enforcement also displayed ease and comfort in using the CAC to conduct forensic interviews and multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meetings. The transformation was noticeable not only to A21 but also to survivors who interacted with Cambodian law enforcement working with A21. A male survivor provided feedback to A21 staff that he was surprised to have a positive experience with Cambodian law enforcement. His case involved an initial forensic interview conducted by A21 and follow-up interviews conducted by Cambodian law enforcement trained by A21 in 2022. The child-survivor reported that the police conducted his follow-up interviews in a very child-friendly and victim-centred manner. As a result of the police’s consideration and sensitivity, the child-survivor advised that he could lower his guard and trust the police. Moreover, due to the police’s victim-centred approach, the child-survivor expressed comfort in engaging directly with the police rather than going through A21 as an intermediary.

AFTERCARE

A21’s Aftercare Program empowers survivors through the provision of holistic aftercare, safe accommodations and relocation services. When survivors receive personalised, trauma-informed care, they can begin the restoration journey. Through the A21 Aftercare Program, survivors have access to services such as psychological consultations, medical services, housing, financial assistance and job training, which allows them to progress into new opportunities, decreasing the risk of re-victimisation. Throughout 2022, A21 supported survivors from various demographics, ages, gender, and nationalities. Survivors welcomed into the program included males, females, and transgender individuals, with 67.5% of survivors identifying as female. Ages ranged from newborn (0 years old) to 40 years old, with 37.5% of new survivors in 2022 in A21’s Aftercare Program being 13 years old or younger.

LAUNCH OF THE FREEDOM CENTRE INCREASES THE RESTORATION OF SURVIVORS

In 2022, aftercare services saw a significant development with the official launch of the Freedom Centre. The Freedom Centre is a drop-in day centre that provides both child and adult survivors of human trafficking with a safe place of acceptance and belonging to empower them with skills and resources to restore wellness and help them reintegrate safely back into society. Over 50% of survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program have fully engaged in the Freedom Centre, receiving services such as case management support and counselling, participating in group programs, and building...
community with other survivors. A21 has observed survivors in Cambodia enthusiastically engage in Life Programs, a collection of strengths-based trauma-informed group and individual programs, that equip survivors with valuable life skills and emotional resilience tools. These programs include Life Skills (focusing on topics such as job readiness, safety, budgeting, goal setting and problem solving), Brave Hearts, Strong Minds (a program that empowers child and adolescent survivors with strategies to enhance their emotional resilience), and Freedom to Flourish (a peer-support program designed to assist female survivors to connect and support one another with intentional and meaningful conversations). Since the launch of the Freedom Centre, A21 has seen a 148% increase in survivors completing Life Programs, as well as an increase in survivors attaining financial independence and graduating from the Aftercare Program.

A21 utilises the Assessment of Survivor Outcomes (ASO) tool to measure a survivor’s functioning in six domains considered critical to restoration, including: safety, legal protection, mental wellbeing, economic empowerment and education, social support, and physical wellbeing. The ASO identifies a survivor’s strengths and vulnerabilities and enables caseworkers to develop an individually tailored case management plan. Caseworkers complete the ASO at survivor intake, case closure, and 12-month follow-up, providing a measure of the survivor’s sustained restoration. In December 2022, ASO scores demonstrated that 100% of survivors who had graduated from the Cambodia Aftercare Program were considered ‘restored’ at the time of graduation, suggesting that these survivors had a high level of stability low vulnerability to revictimisation at case closure.

**A NEW WAY FORWARD - A21’S COLLABORATION ON A FOSTER CARE PROGRAM**

In 2022, A21 also launched a Foster Care Program for child survivors in Cambodia, in collaboration with NGO Hagar International—the leader in foster care across Cambodia for over 20 years. This partnership welcomes Hagar foster care specialists to operate collaboratively with A21’s caseworkers at A21’s new Freedom Centre in Siem Reap, which has areas dedicated solely for child-survivors. At the centre, A21 and Hagar focus on first finding suitable foster care families for child-survivors, and then assessing, training and integrating the families into the foster care program. This partnership also allows A21 to place more young survivors in family-based care instead of institutionalised care.

The Foster Care Program is a much needed service as minor survivors constitute the majority of survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program, with 50% having been trafficked by a family member.

As part of A21’s Foster Care Program, A21 staff members work closely with each foster family and child-survivor to ensure minors receive the care they need to reach their full potential.

In 2022, the three most common recruitment methods based on voluntary disclosures by survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program included tricked or manipulated by a Perceived Liberator/Benefactor (60%), false job opportunity (15%), and tricked by/sold by a family member (7.5%). Other forms of recruitment included loverboy situations, and false immigration promises. Sexual exploitation remains the most common form of trafficking for survivors in the Aftercare Program in 2022 continuing the trend from 2021. Furthermore, 62.50% of new survivors entering A21’s Aftercare Program in 2022 were either survivors of sex trafficking or survivors of online or offline child sexual exploitation. In 2021, survivors of forced begging constituted 24.5% of A21’s total caseload, reflecting survivors who entered A21’s Aftercare Program from previous years. In 2022, survivors of forced begging only comprised 16.85% of the total caseload, including...
In 2021, 33.3% of survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program escaped their trafficking situation while abroad, only to be arrested by authorities in the foreign country for an immigration violation. Only upon being interviewed by their embassy while in the immigration detention centre, are the individuals then identified as victims, repatriated back to Cambodia and assisted by A21.

During 2020 and 2021, A21 worked closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSAVY), as well as the anti-human trafficking police to support the identification and repatriation of a large number of Cambodian survivors trafficked abroad for forced marriage, labour and sex during the COVID-19 pandemic. These trends continued in 2022, and due to the re-opening of the country, more local law enforcement were able to respond by conducting raids and other law enforcement operations. A21’s CAC worked closely with the anti-human trafficking police to support operations and victim identification, especially for minors. This collaboration resulted in 60% of survivors in the Aftercare Program recovered via police intervention in 2022.

The government continued to provide basic care to assist in the repatriation of Cambodian victims exploited abroad. MoSAVY conducted preliminary interviews of the victims and all were referred to local NGOs for aftercare and reintegration assistance. Notably, the government does not require trafficking victims to participate in trafficking investigations or prosecutions to receive protective services. Twelve survivors in the Aftercare Program were repatriated back to their home country in 2022, a 20% increase from 2021.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Cambodia’s Suppression of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation 2008 legislation criminalises sex and labour trafficking and prescribes penalties of seven to 15 years imprisonment for offences involving an adult victim and 15 to 20 years imprisonment for those involving a child victim. This law, coupled with the services of the CAC and the Freedom Centre, has allowed A21 to assist 28 survivors of human trafficking and child sexual exploitation with legal representation or support, through A21’s Legal Assistance Program in 2022; a 46% increase from 2021. A21 supported survivors testifying as key witnesses in four significant criminal prosecutions, resulting in trafficking convictions for all four defendants.
TRAFFICKER SENTENCED TO 12 YEARS FOR SEXUALLY EXPLOITING CHILDREN

A21 staff from the Child Advocacy Centre participated in an operation with the anti-human trafficking police, leading to a rescue of a group of child survivors of sexual exploitation in 2021. A21 coordinated the legal and aftercare services to the child victims, ensuring they received proper legal representation and emotional support throughout the court trial. The child survivors remained resilient, and with support from A21, they bravely testified against the trafficker in court. In 2022 the trafficker was convicted and sentenced to 12 years in jail and required to pay each survivor 10-12 million riels ($2,500-3,000 USD). This was the largest court case that A21 supported in 2022, due to the large number of child survivors linked to the trafficker and the significance of the case in the criminal justice system.
ENDNOTES

3 Ibid.
5 Ibid, 154.
10 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
17 Ibid, 154.
20 See articles like: “Siem Reap Joins Int’l March Against Trafficking.” Phnom Penh Post, m.phnompenhpost.com/national/siem-reap-joins-intl-march-against-trafficking?fbclid=IwAR3c-xSY0zpHxltZg1b079r1J87wqW4PiqD2W5bvz-N4CHHn_wAT_t0qX4.
23 Recruitment by a ‘perceived liberator/benefactor’ occurs where a perpetrator promises to liberate someone from exploitation, harm, or hardship, only to then exploit them.
24 False Immigration Promises is a recruitment tactic where brokers entice victims to travel abroad by promising victims a better life, often including employment, accommodation, or other opportunities, in a foreign country. Once in the foreign country, the victims are trafficked or otherwise exploited.
Greece is primarily a transit and destination country for human trafficking. Victims are transported into Greece to be exploited on the mainland and surrounding islands, or are transported through Greece along migration routes into Western Europe. Refugees coming into and transiting out of Greece could be particularly vulnerable to exploitation if they lack support, do not know the language or their rights, or are unaware of ways to access proper authorities. In 2022, A21 Greece observed trafficking victims in Greece originating primarily from African countries, as well as from Cuba, Nepal, Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, and domestically within Greece. Since its inception in 2008, A21’s Aftercare Program has provided direct services to survivors of 53 different nationalities.

Sex trafficking remains the primary form of exploitation observed by A21, with victims mainly recruited from Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and Africa. A21 observed victims were initially recruited in their home countries, primarily through false job offers and false romantic relationships, and then later exploited within Greece. Additionally, a large number of primarily African migrants sexually exploited in their home country and/or transit countries, and then identified as victims of trafficking upon their arrival in Greece. While forced labour exists, it often occurs in small, remote towns. Moreover, forced labour in Greece is significantly underreported due to a number of factors such as close-knit communities and a lack of awareness of human trafficking. Finally, a lack of resources and training for frontline professionals contribute to low rates of identified victims. Despite the underreporting of labour trafficking cases generally, in 2022, A21 observed increased reports to the national, A21-operated human trafficking hotline (‘1109 Hotline’) regarding cases of potential forced begging, especially those involving children or pregnant women.

RECRUITMENT MECHANISM
False job opportunities, use of false employment openings to recruit individuals, is one of the most common recruitment tactics used by traffickers. As Greece is a destination country receiving thousands of asylum seekers and refugees each year, this recruitment method has gone from the second-most used method to the primary recruitment method for survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program in 2022. Moreover, the 1109 Hotline found false job opportunities to be the most prominent method of recruitment in 2022, accounting for 37.5% of reported cases with a known recruitment method.

GREECE RESPONDS TO THE UKRAINIAN REFUGEE CRISIS
Upon the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Greek government quickly responded to the refugee crisis by providing and coordinating accommodation, access to the national education and healthcare systems, employment opportunities as well as additional integration services. Ukrainian refugees’ Temporary Protective Status in Greece granted them access to medical care and employment. Since March 2022, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 20,955 displaced people from Ukraine arrived in Greece and applied for temporary protection.

International humanitarian organisations immediately responded to the needs of Ukrainian refugees, such as the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) operating the Response on Ukrainian Arrivals (RUA) Helpline Project to support displaced Ukrainians. As refugees fall within a group vulnerable to trafficking, A21 provided training on human trafficking for the DRC’s hotline operators, which included social workers, social scientists, and interpreters. Additionally, A21 created and distributed flyers about the dangers of human trafficking with contact information for the 1109 Hotline and the European emergency number. A21 distributed approximately 15,000 flyers to Ukrainians in Greece in collaboration with UNHCR. A21 also developed an information session on safe employment, which in collaboration with a local partner, was presented to Ukrainian women and girls in Thessaloniki. In addition, the 1109 Hotline partnered with a tele-interpretation service with Ukrainian interpreters available 24/7. For the first time, A21 created and delivered four ‘job vetting’ trainings, that equipped 134 frontline professionals across 20 organisations supporting Ukrainian refugees, with guidance on educating refugees on recognising potentially exploitative employment.

A21 continued to work with refugees from several other countries throughout 2022 and observed a shift from protection to integration in both the Greek government and other humanitarian organisations’ response to the Middle East refugee crisis. Due to
the restructuring of refugee and migrant-related programs and initiatives, the 1109 Hotline received more victim referrals and training requests from governmental entities in 2022 rather than from nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), which had accounted for the majority of referrals and requests in previous years.

A21’S RESPONSE

Since 2008, A21 has operated collaboratively with key government and nongovernment stakeholders to counter human trafficking. By raising awareness and facilitating prevention programs, A21 actively aims to reduce human trafficking. The 1109 Hotline is a critical component of A21’s intervention program to assist in the identification of victims. Following the identification or referral of a victim, A21 provides a holistic, trauma-informed aftercare program focusing on restoration and reintegration alongside vital legal assistance.

PREVENTION & AWARENESS

Through prevention, education and awareness efforts, A21 educates the general public, students, and marginalised and vulnerable populations to identify risks and appropriately report potential human trafficking situations. In 2022, A21 distributed 16,820 prevention materials to the refugee population across Greece, a 113% increase from the previous year due to an increased arrival of refugees from Ukraine. Through social media content, A21 saw a potential reach of 327,835 people. The impact of A21’s prevention efforts is clearly demonstrated through the testimonies of job seekers recognising indicators of trafficking through the ‘Travel Safe’ resource on the 1109 Hotline website, they encouraged their friend to decline the potentially dangerous job offer.

In 2022, A21 for the first time, implemented the Primary Prevention Program (PPP), an interactive, play-based program designed for children aged 6 to 12 years old, resulting in the facilitation of 77 sessions for 846 students. A21 also distributed educational materials designed for older students across secondary schools in Greece, reaching 1,509 students (25% more than in 2021). These materials include A21’s Human Trafficking Awareness Program, Student Digital Safety Guide, and the Safe Relationship Guide. In collaboration with the Directorates of Education, A21 hosted three seminars for 87 primary and secondary school educators. The seminars focused on three topics: general human trafficking information, responding to human trafficking indicators of minors, and A21 educational resources to support educators. A21 also hosted its first webinar based on A21’s Parent Guides for Kids and Teens, with 23 parents in attendance.

In 2022, A21’s Walk For Freedom (WFF), A21’s annual global awareness event coinciding with the EU Anti-Trafficking Day, was held in three Greek cities: Thessaloniki, Volos, and Patra, and in Nicosia, Cyprus. In total, 484 people participated, resulting in the distribution of 1,620 trafficking awareness flyers. Media responded positively, publishing 20 articles in online newspapers and conducting collectively ten television and radio interviews on the walks.

COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGNS REACHES DIVERSE GROUPS

Throughout 2022, A21 collaborated with local and national organisations to implement public awareness campaigns to reach diverse groups across the country. A new, month-long awareness campaign between A21 and Interbus, a Greek advertising company for airports and public transit, reached an estimated 1.5 million people with the 1109 Hotline number via trolleys in Athens. The advertisements, displayed on the outside of the trolleys, encouraged the public to report any suspected cases of human trafficking. A21 reached over 1.1 million people through social and mass media through a photography campaign in collaboration with Greek film director Konstantinos Mousoulis, award-winning photographer Akis Douslatzis, well-
known actresses Maria Korinthiou and Ifigenia Tzola, and athlete Errika Prezerakou. The celebrities presented three stories of sexual exploitation and human trafficking to promote the 1109 Hotline. In light of Giving Tuesday, TedxAthens invited A21 Greece to conduct a presentation on the mental health implications of human trafficking for the personnel of a large software company in Athens.

IDENTIFICATION & INTERVENTION

A21’s identification and intervention efforts include operating the 1109 Hotline, a 24/7 nationally available human trafficking hotline, and providing frontline professional training for those most likely to encounter potential victims of trafficking through their daily work.

Through strong collaborations with public and private sector partners, A21 trained 980 individuals both in-person and virtually in 2022. These individuals comprised of frontline professionals, law students, and specialized volunteers in the medical, legal and psychology fields to international organizations focused on assisting vulnerable populations. The ‘Identification of Potential Trafficking Victims’ training was particularly successful, as A21 received additional training requests after previous trainees recommended it to colleagues and other organisations. A21 trained a wide range of individuals during the reporting year, including 214 service providers for refugees and asylum seekers, 73 public educators, and 37 students and alumni from the European Law Students’ Association in victim identification. In addition, 205 state and local government professionals received targeted training for their specific districts.

With funding from the Active Citizens Fund (ACF) (Bodossaki), A21 trained an additional 128 professionals, including psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and legal professionals. As a result of these training sessions, A21, IOM and the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) co-hosted two pilot trainings on victim identification and the benefits of cooperation between organisations to combat human trafficking.

The A21-operated 1109 Hotline maintained steady cooperation with the anti-trafficking police units in Athens and Thessaloniki throughout 2022. As part of this trusted alliance, A21 and the anti-trafficking police co-trained 118 police officers from several police departments across the city over four sessions at a counter-trafficking conference held at the Police Headquarters in Thessaloniki. Furthermore, A21 and a representative of the Hellenic Coast Guard attendee of the conference, co-trained 35 members of the Hellenic Coast Guard. Other law enforcement attendees of the conference likewise arranged for two additional co-training sessions with A21 in Northern Greece for 36 local police officers.

AWARENESS OF THE 1109 HOTLINE RESULTS IN INCREASED REPORTS

Throughout 2022, efforts to enhance public awareness of the 1109 Hotline, resulted in 1,690 contacts to the hotline, 80.5% of which related to human trafficking. The high rate of human trafficking related contacts suggests the success of these campaigns in accurately conveying the services provided by the 1109 Hotline. Reports to the 1109 Hotline were received from various sources including potential victims, law enforcement, and NGOs. However, community members comprised the highest number of callers (46%). These reports enabled the 1109 Hotline to report almost twice as many cases to the police in 2022 as in 2021, as well as successfully assist in the identification or referral of 67 victims of human trafficking, a 76% increase since 2021.

A21 screened and identified a total of 39 victims of trafficking in 2022, referring 26 to A21 aftercare services. Based on the information gathered by A21 through calls to the 1109 Hotline, referrals from the police, and screenings of potential victims of trafficking during anti-trafficking police-led operations, A21 observed two trends. Firstly, a significant number of forced begging victims identified by A21 and the police originated from the city of Plevin Bulgaria. A second trend identified a particular method of control, involving traffickers assigning ‘boyfriends’ to victims of sex trafficking. During victim identification screening interviews, many victims disclosed a relationship with someone they met once in Greece, referring to that person as ‘my husband’ or ‘my boyfriend’, who ultimately were members of the trafficking ring. While similar to the loverboy recruitment method, using boyfriends as a means of control following recruitment and for the full duration of a victim’s exploitation is a new phenomenon observed by A21 in 2022.

During victim identification efforts, the A21-operated 1109 Hotline may if warranted, provide intelligence to the anti-trafficking police departments about suspected trafficking cases. Once law enforcement recovers a victim, A21 at times continues with
meeting recently recovered survivors at the police station for support as they provide their testimony. Simultaneously, A21 will provide any immediate needs of the survivors, such as arranging medical examinations and urgent accommodation. A21 provided support to 15 survivors identified as a result of seven police-led operations as well as referrals to A21 by law enforcement. Detailed analysis, including victim demographics, recruitment tactics and other data insights can be found in the attached annual 1109 Hotline Report.

‘A21 is a valuable partner that is providing solutions to our problems.’
— Anti-Trafficking Police Officer, Thessaloniki

AFTERCARE

A21 provides comprehensive trauma-informed aftercare services for survivors of trafficking, according to each individual’s needs, to assist them at each stage of their progression from crisis intervention to restoration and independence. In 2022, 54 survivors entered A21’s Aftercare Program, a 74% increase from 2021. Awareness events, the 1109 Hotline’s promotion, networking efforts, and collaborations contributed to increase the number of survivors referred to its Aftercare Program. In total, A21 assisted 84 survivors in its Aftercare Program in 2022, a 40% increase compared to 2021. Most survivors assisted in 2022 originated from Africa (50%), followed by Europe (25.9%), Asia (18.5%) and North America (5.6%). A21 assisted slightly more Greek survivors in 2022 (5.6%) than the previous year (3.2%).

In 2022, false job opportunities (33.3%), where traffickers advertise job listings to recruit vulnerable individuals searching for work or better wages, constituted the most common recruitment method of survivors entering the Aftercare Program. The second most common recruitment method was traffickers appearing as ‘liberators’ or ‘benefactors’ to victims of exploitation, harm, or hardship, only to then exploit them (20.4%).

FREEDOM CENTRE OFFERS HOLISTIC SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS

The A21 Aftercare Program utilises a community model of service provision that assists survivors in reintegrating safely and independently back into their community through accessing local services. A21’s Freedom Centre, a drop-in day centre that provides survivors of human trafficking a safe place to meet with their caseworker, build community with other survivors, and access A21 aftercare services, is central to this model. In 2022, 33 survivors attended the Freedom Centre, many of whom engaged in Greek language lessons, job searches, creative activities, and survivor celebrations. Survivors within A21’s Aftercare Program were also provided with medical and dental treatment, psychological consultations, legal assistance, individual sessions with their caseworker, and financial support. Engagement in Life Programs is a key focus for A21 Aftercare. Through these various group and individual...
programs, staff observed many survivors benefitting from developing practical life skills, building self-esteem and confidence, strengthening relationships with other survivors, completing job readiness training and being equipped with strategies to manage the impact of trauma. In 2022, 46% (39) of all survivors completed a Life Program, with some completing multiple programs. One survivor shared with her caseworker “I feel respected by you and empowered by the programs, I am always looking forward to our sessions” and another program participant shared “When you tell me new things, I share them with my friends so that they learn it, too.”

ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT OFFERS SURVIVORS THE CHANCE TO BUILD THEIR FUTURE

In 2022, A21 provided 26 survivors with accommodation support services. Thirteen survivors received emergency accommodation, such as temporary hotel stays. Nine survivors stayed at the A21 Home, an emergency shelter that accommodates survivors in the initial months following their exit from trafficking. A21 also offers long-term accommodation support through rent assistance and A21 apartments. A21 apartments provide survivors with safe and stable independent accommodation for up to 12 months. Eight survivors lived in A21 apartments throughout the year and five survivors received rent assistance. The provision of long-term accommodation allows survivors the time to stabilise, attend the Freedom Centre, engage in Life Programs, and pursue education or employment opportunities without the financial stress of paying for housing. Many survivors use this time to learn budgeting skills and save for their next steps. In 2022, 14 survivors successfully transitioned out of an A21 accommodation and into independent living.

SURVIVORS SAFELY RETURNED HOME

Greece is both a destination country for human trafficking and a country where many victims of trafficking from neighbouring countries flee to find safety. In 2022, A21 welcomed survivors from 20 other nations. While some survivors choose to stay in Greece and seek asylum and residency, others make the choice to return to their home country. A21 Survivor Relocation Services (A21 SRS) provides safe transportation for survivors who require domestic relocation and international repatriation. In 2022, A21 supported seven international repatriations from Greece to Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania, France, and Germany; and one repatriation to Greece from Sweden. Additionally, four survivors were supported with domestic relocation services. Where possible, A21 seeks to connect survivors who have repatriated with a local partner organisation within their home community so they can receive ongoing aftercare support. If no local aftercare services are available at the survivor’s final destination, A21 caseworkers will continue to provide remote services.

REMOTE AFTERCARE SERVICES SUPPORT SURVIVORS ACROSS GREECE

Although A21 prefers providing its services in-person at the Freedom Centre, A21 provides remote support to survivors living in various locations outside of Thessaloniki. Remote services have been provided to survivors in refugee camps awaiting asylum processing, survivors relocated for employment opportunities and survivors identified in Athens who choose to stay there. Remote support allows A21 to extend services to survivors living across the country, continue support for relocated survivors and those unable to travel to Thessaloniki the opportunity to meet online with aftercare staff. On occasion, A21 staff will travel to provide emergency in-person services to survivors receiving aftercare services remotely. When possible, A21 attempts to hold in-person meetings with survivors who have been assisted remotely. In 2022, A21 assisted 53% of survivors in-person and 46% remotely.

100% OF SURVIVORS WHO GRADUATE GREECE AFTERCARE RESTORED AT CASE CLOSURE

The Assessment of Survivor Outcomes (ASO) tool assesses the progress survivors of human trafficking make toward restoration in key areas of functioning, including safety, legal protection, mental wellbeing, economic empowerment and education, social support and physical wellbeing. Caseworkers complete the ASO at survivor intake, case closure, and 12-month follow-up. A21 has been using the ASO since 2019 on all survivors receiving assistance beyond crisis intervention. In 2022, 39 survivor cases were closed by A21 Greece, of which an initial ASO had been completed on 21 cases. Upon case closure, 14 of those 21 closed cases received an ASO score considered stable or highly stable with low vulnerability to re-victimisation, and
100% of graduated survivors were considered ‘Restored’ at the time of their graduation. Furthermore, follow up of survivors 12 months after case closure revealed that 87.5% were still considered ‘Restored’.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

SURVIVORS RECEIVING A21 LEGAL REPRESENTATION INCREASES BY 31%

A21’s Legal Assistance Program provides survivors with legal representation for both criminal and civil proceedings, as well as other support in preparation for in-court proceedings. In 2022, 46 survivors, including minors, engaged in the Legal Assistance Program with 31% more survivors receiving legal representation in court proceedings than in 2021. Trials postponed from 2020 and early 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions finally resumed in 2022, with many reaching resolution. In 2022, 10 defendants were convicted for a myriad of trafficking offences as well as offences against children, and sentenced to a total of 99 years of imprisonment and 48,500 euros in financial penalties.

Labour trafficking survivors exploited on a poultry farm in Southern Greece eight years ago received justice when the court finally convicted their exploiter, a local businessman. This labour trafficking conviction is particularly significant as Greece historically has focused on sex and not labour trafficking.

In a separate case, A21 successfully provided legal representation for a female survivor who had been domestically abused, trafficked and sexually exploited by her husband. The court convicted the defendant of human trafficking, drug trafficking, domestic violence, threat, bodily harm, domestic sexual assault and exposure of a minor to risk; he was sentenced to 25 years of incarceration with a financial penalty of 31,500 euros.

In a mixed jury court in Northern Greece, A21 represented a survivor of sex trafficking who had sustained significant psychological and emotional trauma, as well as physical injuries from being trafficked. As a result of the prosecutor and judges’ extensive knowledge of the protective legislative framework for the victims’ rights in the context of the criminal procedure, the defendant was found unanimously guilty and sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment with no reduction in sentence based on mitigating circumstances.

A21 SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDS MINOR SURVIVOR OF PERJURY CHARGE

Three minor survivors also received justice in three separate cases. In the first case, the court convicted one defendant of human trafficking. In the second case, the defendant was found guilty of child pimping and a child sexual abuse image (CSAM) offence (a.k.a. ‘child pornography’). In the third case, the court found five defendants guilty of child abduction, child pimping, and a CSAM offence. Throughout the court hearings, A21 provided the survivors with a victims’ attorney who advocated for their rights throughout the trials. In addition to representing survivors as a victim’s attorney in a criminal prosecution, A21 also provides defence attorneys to defend survivors in A21’s Legal Assistance Program being prosecuted for offences committed during the trafficking incident. In one such unprecedented case, one of the minor victims had also been charged with perjury. A21’s attorney successfully defended the minor victim to acquittal by arguing the application of the non-punishment principle for victims of human trafficking, as set forth in the national criminal code and in compliance with the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and other EU and International directives and standards. Finally, the occurrence of the perpetrators’ criminal convictions permit the victims to pursue restitution and other monetary claims in civil courts with continued legal representation on those matters from A21.

While the harm and trauma endured by the trafficking survivors in these cases can not be quantified by these sentences, the increase in sentences from prior years demonstrate the Greek courts’ growing and deeper understanding of the complex crime of human trafficking, including victims’ rights and the intertwining of other crimes with trafficking.

MEMBERS OF TRANSNATIONAL TRAFFICKING RING ARRESTED

In 2022, A21 participated in a joint operation with the Athens anti-trafficking police, Europol, the Moldovan police, and another counter-trafficking NGO, after the anti-trafficking police discovered information about a potential sex trafficking victim of Moldovan origin. Following an investigation revealing a transnational trafficking ring with multiple potential victims, authorities raided six brothels and arrested nine members of a trafficking ring. The trafficking ring, operational since late 2019, recruited vulnerable, economically poor Moldovan women with the promise of relocation to Greece at no cost and a legitimate job. However, upon arrival at the airport, they were brought to an apartment where they were supervised by leading members of the ring. Under the pretext of repaying an exorbitant debt for their relocation to Greece and a high monthly rent, the traffickers forced the women to participate in commercial sex in at least six brothels, while withholding a large part of the income. Once identified and recovered from the brothels, two survivors were connected with A21 staff, who provided crisis care, through addressing their immediate needs, as well as supporting them as they testified at the police station. A21 continued to support the survivors with additional aftercare services including relocation, accommodation, medical care, and psychosocial support.
ENDNOTES


2 Ibid.


ABOUT THE 1109 HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

The ‘1109’ Human Trafficking Hotline (1109 Hotline) is the only hotline in Greece dedicated to both responding to reports of and supporting victims of human trafficking. Operated nationally by the nongovernmental organisation (NGO) A21, trained call specialists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to provide advice, assistance, and access to victim support services, as well as receive reports about potential human trafficking. The 1109 Hotline utilises a tele-interpreting service that enables Greek and English-speaking operators to handle calls in over 230 languages. These specially trained professionals work closely with national institutions to ensure fast and effective responses to each case.

‘A21 is an NGO, but we call them partners. They provide solutions to our problems.’
—Police Officer, Anti-Trafficking Division

OVERVIEW OF DATA¹

In 2022, the 1109 Hotline received 1,690 contacts via phone, email, text, and the dedicated website (1109.gr), 419 of which related to new unique cases. 1109 Hotline data indicates a shift in preferred communication methods; hotline users reported 28.16% of new unique cases online in 2022, a 46.6% increase since 2021.

A noticeable number of contacts to the 1109 Hotline (80.5%) were human trafficking related. A number of callers advised that they were made aware of the 1109 Hotline’s services through various public service announcements (PSA) as well as news stories resulting from reports to the 1109 Hotline. In 2022, the 1109 Hotline advertised its service through a month-long PSA broadcasted on national television networks, advertising the hotline number across public transportation in Athens, and promoting the hotline at in-person or online training and networking events. Moreover, a social media campaign inspired and executed by well-known and award-winning artists, namely director Konstantinos Mousoulis and photographer Akis Douslatzis, featuring well-known athlete Errika Prezerakou and popular actresses Maria Korinthiou and Ifigenia Tzola, resulted in increased awareness.

EXCLUSIVE SUMMARY

• The 1109 Hotline received 1,690 CONTACTS

• 80.5% of contacts were specifically related to HUMAN TRAFFICKING

• The majority of potential victims reported to the 1109 Hotline were FEMALE (68.9%) ¹

• The 1109 Hotline received reports of 309 POTENTIAL VICTIMS of trafficking from 35 DIFFERENT NATIONS

• The 1109 Hotline received 118 ONLINE REPORTS, a 42.2% INCREASE since 2021

• The 1109 Hotline identified and/or assisted 67 VICTIMS of human trafficking, 54 of whom entered the A21 Aftercare Program

• 45.9% of all contacts were from the GENERAL PUBLIC

• MINOR VICTIMS accounted for 22.7% of reports to the 1109 Hotline

• The 1109 Hotline submitted DOUBLE the number of POLICE REPORTS compared to 2021

¹ ‘Contacts’ to the 1109 Hotline comprise of all incoming enquiries to the 1109 Hotline through any means, including but not limited to phone calls, emails, SMS and online web submissions. These enquiries include all reports on potential human trafficking, various crimes both related and unrelated to human trafficking, and queries about human trafficking generally, as well as requests for various types of assistance related to human trafficking, such as safety planning or job vetting.

¹ ‘Reports’ only include contacts to the 1109 Hotline relating to a potential human trafficking situation.

The statistics below are exclusively drawn from substantive contacts made to the 1109 Hotline from January – December 2022 concerning human trafficking matters. This report is not a reflection of all substantive calls to the 1109 Hotline which may include calls related to other high-risk crimes, labour exploitation and other nontrafficking issues.

Disaggregated data has been collected on each individual case based on descriptive factors including gender, age, type of trafficking, methods of control and recruitment methods. The data contained herein is based on the cases where the information was available. In the majority of cases, the call specialists were unable to glean full or specific details about the case. Therefore the data below is based on cases where the specified information was made available.
CALLER DEMOGRAPHICS
Potential victims, concerned friends or family members, NGOs, law enforcement, community members and other sources report suspected human trafficking to the 1109 Hotline. Despite a notable decline in contacts from the general public in 2021, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, contacts from this demographic have since increased by 32.3%, accounting for 45.9% of all contacts in 2022. The number of potential victims contacting the hotline quadrupled from the previous reporting year from 3 to 13.

NGOs or Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs), particularly the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), cumulatively accounted for 34.2% of contacts to the 1109 Hotline. These contacts by NGOs and IGOs resulted in referrals of 45 potential victims, mostly migrants and refugees needing support, to the 1109 Hotline for assistance. A21 Greece’s continued collaboration with Greek law enforcement resulted in referrals of 15 victims of human trafficking to the 1109 Hotline. In several cases, the 1109 Hotline also collaborated with the immigration police to assist individuals who had been held captive by smugglers. In two separate instances, the 1109 Hotline received reports that resulted in the extraction of 11 victims being held against their will by smugglers. One case involved seven victims, while the other involved four.

In 2022, A21 Greece submitted 87 reports relating to potential trafficking situations to the police, almost doubling the number of reports submitted the previous year. Of the cases reported to the police, 53% related to forced begging incidents and 30% related to suspected sex trafficking. As a result of reports sent by the 1109 Hotline, Greek police recovered two victims of forced begging. These two cases then drew media attention, leading to increased reports to the 1109 Hotline about incidences of begging.

AGE AND GENDER
While adults still constituted the majority (67%) of potential victims reported to the 1109 Hotline, reports involving minor victims remained relatively high at 22.7%, consistent with the previous year. Notably, the predominant form of exploitation of minors regardless of gender, was forced begging, which accounted for over 70% of cases involving minors. While any individual can be exploited through forced begging, the 1109 Hotline has observed that often vulnerable children are targeted. Moreover, in such cases involving children, the 1109 Hotline has observed parents facilitating the trafficking.

The majority of potential victims reported to the 1109 Hotline were female (68.9%), trafficked predominantly for sexual exploitation, followed by forced begging. The primary form of exploitation reported for male potential victims, regardless of age, was forced begging, followed by forced labour.

VICTIM DEMOGRAPHICS
In 2022, the 1109 Hotline received reports relating to 309 potential victims of trafficking. After investigating further, the 1109 Hotline successfully identified and/or assisted 67 confirmed victims of trafficking. Fifty-four of these survivors entered A21’s Aftercare Program, representing a 74% increase in survivors entering A21’s Aftercare Program since 2021 from the 1109 Hotline.

VICTIM NATIONALITY
The 1109 Hotline identified and/or assisted potential victims from 35 different nations in 2022, including Greece, Bulgaria and Romania. This represents a 29.6% increase in distinct nationalities engaged with by the 1109 Hotline compared to the 27 nationalities identified the previous year. Greek remained the most reported nationality of potential victims (11.3%), with the majority being Greek Roma, especially in cases of forced begging. The 1109 Hotline has also received
For the first time since the 1109 Hotline’s inception, sex trafficking was not the primary form of exploitation reported. Forced begging exceeded the number of reported cases of sex trafficking by 9.5%. Greece’s large cities suffer from forced begging, especially during the holiday season. However, many people can also be seen begging in the summer. These individuals are usually very poorly dressed and often have babies or small children accompanying them, seemingly to arouse emotions of pity. Older children may be left on their own to beg in a different location than their ‘guardian’. Growing up under this abuse, these children may not attempt to break free or aspire for a better future. In the forced begging cases reported to A21 Greece, the victims had not received any education and lacked access to fundamental necessities.

Among the trafficking cases reported to the 1109 Hotline, domestic servitude remains the fourth most reported form of trafficking. Reports of domestic servitude have all been related to the refugee and migrant population, and in most cases, the trafficking occurred before they entered Greece.

**RECRUITMENT METHODS**

Human trafficking recruitment methods involve deception, coercion or force to lure victims and keep them in exploitative circumstances. For example, a trafficker may use a false job opportunity to recruit a potential victim with deceptive terms of an agreement to travel to another city. Upon arrival, the trafficker then traps the victim in debt bondage. In the complex, more drawn-out ‘loverboy’ scheme, a trafficker grooms and manipulates a victim into a false romantic relationship, with the ultimate goal of sexually trafficking the victim. In many cases reported to the 1109 Hotline, the actual recruitment methods are unknown. However, in reports with identified methods, the most prominent tactic used to recruit individuals was through a false job opportunity, often in a foreign country. Being sold by a family member, where family members sell or commercially exploit victims, emerged as the second most prevalent method accounting for 23.3% of cases of known recruitment methods. In many cases, the 1109 Hotline observed another prominent recruitment method involving a ‘perceived liberator/benefactor’. Recruitment through a ‘perceived liberator/benefactor’ occurs when a perpetrator promises to liberate someone from exploitation, harm or hardship, only to then exploit them.

**EXPOSURE TYPE**

For the first time since the 1109 Hotline’s inception, sex trafficking was not the primary form of exploitation reported. Forced begging exceeded the number of reported cases of sex trafficking by 9.5%. Greece’s large cities suffer from forced begging, especially during the holiday season. However, many people can also be seen begging in the summer. These individuals are usually very poorly dressed and often have babies or small children accompanying them, seemingly to arouse emotions of pity. Older children may be left on their own to beg in a different location than their ‘guardian’. Growing up under this abuse, these children may not attempt to break free or aspire for a better future. In the forced begging cases reported to A21 Greece, the victims had not received any education and lacked access to fundamental necessities.

Among the trafficking cases reported to the 1109 Hotline, domestic servitude remains the fourth most reported form of trafficking. Reports of domestic servitude have all been related to the refugee and migrant population, and in most cases, the trafficking occurred before they entered Greece.
METHODS OF CONTROL
Reports to the 1109 Hotline revealed psychological abuse as the most common primary method of control used by traffickers. However, traffickers rarely use just one method of control; rather, they use a combination of tactics to coerce and manipulate victims. Other reported tactics utilised by traffickers to control their victims include sexual, physical and emotional abuse; economic abuse; isolation; threats; and withholding of personal identification documents.

RECRUITMENT AND EXPLOITATION LOCATION
Notably, of the 67 confirmed victims of trafficking reported to the 1109 Hotline in 2022, only 42.9% were exploited in Greece, while in the majority of cases (57.1%), exploitation occurred abroad. A typical pattern amongst migrant and refugee victims showed their exploitation occurring either in their country of origin or along their journey towards Europe. For example, 25.7% of migrant/refugee victims were exploited in Turkey, a neighbouring country, before arriving in Greece. Similarly, only 26.9% of all confirmed cases involved recruitment in Greece, while the recruitment of the remaining 73.1% occurred in other countries, as seen in the following graph.

PERPETRATOR DEMOGRAPHICS
‘Perpetrator Demographics’ are compiled from reports to the 1109 Hotline by trafficking victims. Females accounted for 15.8% of reported perpetrators, while the majority (84.2%) were male. The chart below displays the reported countries of origin most frequently associated with perpetrators, with Turkey being the most common, comprising 21.5% of known cases.
PERSISTENT REPORTING LEADS TO THE SAFE RECOVERY OF A CHILD FORCED TO BEG

In response to multiple reports about a young child begging, the 1109 Hotline responded by filing police reports and closely monitoring the situation. In response to the reports from the 1109 Hotline, the anti-trafficking police conducted a multi-day investigation and arrested a woman perpetrator. The police investigation revealed that the woman, with the written consent from the child’s foreign mother, travelled with the minor to the city centre every day for weeks. They sat outside commercial shops and begged for more than 12 hours each day, neglecting the child’s well-being and appearance to elicit sympathy from passersby and maximise financial gain. Additionally, for over a year, the perpetrator had been transporting and exploiting the young girl at regular intervals throughout the country, for months at a time, disregarding her education, health and overall welfare. After the perpetrator’s arrest, A21 accompanied the child to a clinic for completion of the necessary medical examinations for safe placement into a children’s home.

NEW YEAR’S INTERVENTION

Shortly after midnight on January 1st, 2022, the 1109 Hotline received a call from a brothel client. The caller, who had become acquainted with a young Latin American woman working in a brothel in Athens, believed she was there against her will. The caller initially hesitated to provide details, afraid both for his life and also for the wellbeing of the potential victim. However, after the hotline call specialist encouraged the caller and explained that the information was vital to the potential victim’s escape, he agreed to provide more details about the case. He disclosed valuable information, giving a full description of the potential victim, her name and social media accounts, as well as her home address and a description of the brothel where she worked. After confirming the information, the call specialist submitted a report to the anti-trafficking police in Athens. The police later informed the 1109 Hotline they had been closely investigating the case, and along with additional intelligence from a local police department, conducted a raid and recovered three female victims and one male victim, all of Latin American origin. All four survivors were offered assistance and support from A21. Law enforcement arrested the perpetrators, a Bulgarian man and a Cuban woman, and charged them with a human trafficking offence.

ENDNOTES

1 To ensure data integrity, the data presented is extracted from reports submitted to the 1109 Hotline consisting of those identified as victims and likely potential victims of trafficking. This report takes a conservative approach in presenting hotline data and analysis, omitting reports of potential victims of human trafficking which were unable to be minimally substantiated.

Economic abuse includes situations of debt bondage or where traffickers limit the victim’s finances either in whole or in part.

Isolation may include physical isolation or deprivation of liberty, denying access to medical support, surveillance or control of the victim in public, and isolating the victim by moving them frequently from place to place.

Violence includes threats of harm to the victim, their family or other individuals; to the victim’s reputation; or to report them to the police, immigration authorities or other government authorities.

As a service situated to support those in exploitative situations, the 1109 Hotline is at the forefront of understanding emerging human trafficking trends in Greece. Each year the 1109 Hotline commits to expanding its networks and partners across Greece to ensure that an accurate scope of trafficking is reflected in the data collected. The 1109 Hotline welcomes new partners interested in counter-human trafficking efforts in Greece. Partnerships are vital not only to provide services to identified trafficking survivors and communities requesting training but also to increase awareness about the services provided by the 1109 Hotline across Greece.

info@1109.gr   www.1109.gr

The observations contained in this report are limited to information communicated to the 1109 Hotline during the reporting period. Nothing arising from the data should be interpreted as showing the full extent or prevalence of human trafficking in Greece.
Vulnerability factors such as poverty and unemployment render many South Africans particularly vulnerable to human trafficking.\(^1\) Sex trafficking remains the most common type of trafficking that is identified and reported, with general agreement by experts in the field that labour trafficking is prevalent but underreported. The majority of victims identified by the National Human Trafficking Hotline\(^2\) (NHTH) this year were South African. However, it should be noted that the number of foreign nationals identified this year has increased from 2021. Victims hailed from countries such as Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Nigeria, as well as countries further afield such as China and Thailand. The U.S. State Department observed that although more victims were identified and more shelters were accredited to accommodate victims of human trafficking, there was still limited coordination and training for key government agencies responsible for identifying and assisting victims; South Africa therefore remains on the Tier 2 watchlist for the second consecutive year.\(^3\)

In addition, the war has served to exacerbate South Africa’s nation-wide power outages, known as ‘load shedding’. Eskom (South Africa’s state owned power supplier) has experienced great difficulty in securing diesel to burn its turbines and has imposed rolling nation-wide power outages for anywhere between 2.5 to 12 hours per day. This continues to have a detrimental effect on businesses, employment and the financial stability of the country.\(^4\)

The long-term implications of the war include a possible geopolitical realignment, social and economic instability and debt unsustainability, leading to widening inequality and deeper poverty. Food insecurity is likely to last and have a negative impact on all aspects of human development from income to health and education, significantly increasing the vulnerability of the South African population to many social ills, including human trafficking. These factors have increased vulnerabilities as A21 South Africa has observed an noticeable increase of victims initially recruited or attempted to be recruited into trafficking through false employment and study opportunities.

**RECESSION AMPLIFIES ECONOMIC TURMOIL FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE**

The ripple effects of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 manifested in Africa escalating fuel and food prices, inflation and financial instability. The poorest and most vulnerable were disproportionately impacted with the sharp increase in cost for basic needs such as food and transport, resulting in hunger and hardship for thousands of households in South Africa. The petrol price in South Africa for example has increased by 53.8% in one year.\(^4\) South Africa experienced steep increases in core food items most frequently purchased by lower-income households,\(^5\) which comprise most of the households in the country.

**A21’S RESPONSE**

Since 2013, A21 South Africa (A21) has operated using a three-pronged strategy to combat human trafficking. Prevention and awareness strategies actively work to reduce the prevalence of trafficking; identification and intervention programs aim to disrupt the ongoing criminal activities and identify victims including through the NHTH; and restorative aftercare services and reintegration programs support survivors of trafficking in their journey after identification.

**PREVENTION & AWARENESS**

Prevention and awareness efforts at A21 focus on reducing vulnerability to exploitation through educational curricula, prevention programs, and awareness campaigns. As a result of these efforts, in 2022 a total of 10,175 were reached with prevention programs, compared to 2,832 in 2021. Awareness campaigns and materials had five times the impact across the year reaching 14,911 people in contrast to 2,528 individuals in 2021. One explanation for these increases may be partially due to the impact of the transition out of the National State of Disaster caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, thus allowing for more in-person events, such as school presentations. The lifting of the restrictions also enabled A21 to implement a new targeted approach to prevention efforts. This strategy involved targeting schools, community policing.
forums, youth organisations, social workers and police stations all within a specific community, and building strong relationships with these partners. This has resulted in great momentum and valuable partnerships for longer-term impact.

**DEMAND FOR PREVENTION MATERIALS TAILORED TO CHILDREN INCREASES**

Understanding that children are especially vulnerable to exploitation, A21 has created resources tailored to children based on their age. After a successful pilot project in 2021, the Early Childhood Prevention Program (ECPF) was officially launched in South Africa and across A21’s global channels in 2022. The ECPF equips children between the age of 3 and 6 with safety tools as they navigate potentially dangerous situations in their young lives. The program content and ‘Steps to Staying Safe Storybook’ have been translated and filmed in three different languages (English, Afrikaans and Xhosa), allowing more high-risk communities in South Africa to be reached. The translated versions will officially be launched and available to download in 2023. Working alongside a community organisation in a hotspot area, A21 also hosted an afterschool program. This project resulted in 66 minors completing the ECPF and more program roll outs secured for early 2023. Moreover, through a grant secured at the end of 2022, A21 intends to expand ECPF distribution in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal in 2023, including translating the program content into more languages and training teachers to facilitate the program. This expansion has the potential to reach 200 Early Childhood Development (ECD) facilities and thousands of children across the two provinces.

The Primary Prevention Program (PPP) teaches children at the primary school level to make informed decisions that protect themselves and others, as well as empowers them to be vocal. As a result of the great demand for presentations from primary schools, 7,246 minors were reached in 2022 compared to 1,749 minors in 2021, accounting for a 314% increase.

In November 2022, A21 launched ‘Staying Safe Online’, a digital safety comic book that is available for download. This comic book helps children better understand the dangers of interacting online and to recognise an unsafe online situation. This global resource incidentally coincided with South Africa’s release of ‘Disrupting harm in South Africa: Evidence on online child exploitation and abuse’ further evincing the timeliness of this resource as South Africa focuses on addressing online exploitation.

A21 had another successful year implementing its Can You See Me? (CYSM) public awareness campaign (See Appendix A). CYSM educates the public on the common types of human trafficking seen locally, prompting viewers to report any suspicious activity to the NHTH. CYSM increased exposure with a digital billboard in a reported hotspot in Kimberly, situated in the Northern Cape, reaching an estimated 524,000 people per month over a 6 month period (more than 3 million people in total). A continued partnership with Intercape, the largest intercity passenger transport in Southern Africa, also allowed the CYSM scenarios to be aired on selected bus routes, on an ongoing basis. Intercape’s services extend to main cities across South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mozambique, Malawi and Namibia.

A21 COLLABORATES IN THE ‘16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE’ EVENTS

The South African government sponsors an annual campaign ‘16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence’ from 25 November to 10 December 2022. This campaign mobilises government departments such as the Department of Health, the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the Department of Social Development (DSD), amongst others, to equip a number of vulnerable groups in society, with a focus on women and children with the necessary tools and information to protect themselves. A21 attended 11 government-initiated events, attended by 1,981 individuals, resulting in a potential impact of 46,592 people through materials distributed over the 16 day period. These government sponsored events focused on educating vulnerable groups and the public about gender based violence generally, which includes aspects of human trafficking and in particular, sex trafficking.

A21 partnered with various government departments to conduct workshops, informational sessions and exhibition stands at these events. One workshop hosted by A21 focused on prevention material for 40 homeless individuals at high risk to be exploited, such as through false job opportunities. At another event sponsored by SAPS, A21 empowered 200 destitute and vulnerable individuals exposed to risk factors such as instability, poor education, substance misuse, poverty and homelessness. Through this annual campaign, A21 observed the government’s concerted national effort to protect the country’s most vulnerable from exploitation.
The online and hard copy distribution of other A21 prevention resources including the Safe Relationship Guide, Safe Employment Guide and Student Digital Safety Guide increased by 125% and reached 2,158 people in 2022, compared to 959 in 2021.

IDENTIFICATION & INTERVENTION

Understanding that training individuals most likely to encounter human trafficking is necessary for successful intervention, A21 regularly provides training to key government and civil society stakeholders. In 2022, A21 provided training to 584 such individuals, more than doubling the number of frontline professionals trained in 2021. A21 focused its training on improving understanding of and responding to human trafficking cases, and decreasing the misidentification of victims.

NEW FRONTLINE TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS

In 2022, A21 forged a partnership with the Department of Health to initiate an annual train-the-trainer workshop. Notably, this is the only partnership the department has with a counter-human trafficking organisation. The first workshop occurred in April 2022 and trained healthcare workers to first identify and respond to human trafficking, and then to conduct similar trainings of their own. The second workshop, scheduled for the end of May 2023, provides both refresher training and an opportunity to train new staff. A21 also continued their relationship with nonprofit organisation FAMSA (Family and Marriage Society of South Africa) and developed a new one with Rape Crisis, resulting in the training of 50 volunteer counsellors from across the two non-profit organisations.

Other professional training included one specifically tailored for DSD for 75 child protection social workers across the Western Cape and for professionals in the financial sector, including those in South Africa’s Anti-Money Laundering Integrated Task Force (SAM-LIT). Training was provided to a wide range of professionals in the financial industry including professionals in non-customer facing roles. While those professionals are unlikely to encounter a victim of trafficking in their daily work, their expertise can still significantly contribute to minimising revictimisation. Training in this sector for example, showcased the need for survivor specific bank accounts in South Africa. Survivors can struggle to open up a bank account once they have exited their trafficking situation due to a lack of proper identification. The lack of access to a formal banking institution can subsequently result in an inability to obtain a stable job, enter into a rental agreement and in some circumstances, even undertake basic tasks like booking a bus ticket, thus increasing a survivor’s vulnerability and increasing the likelihood of being retrafficked. The banking sector, and specifically SAMLIT, are looking at ways to ease the normal compliance requirements to enable survivors to obtain an account without the need for the usual documentation.

‘[The training has helped me] to become more vigilant and to always have in mind that what sometimes looks obvious is not so obvious. Also that we don’t have to look at dealing with human trafficking as extra work because we have the tools we just had to broaden our mindset and educate ourselves on things we are not familiar with. It’s doable!’

- Child Protection Social Worker, DSD

INCREASE IN VICTIMS RECRUITED WITH FALSE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The NHTH serves as the only hotline in South Africa dedicated to receive solely reports on suspected human trafficking. Reports are routinely compiled and submitted to relevant investigative authorities, the Trafficking in Persons Provincial Task Teams (PTTs) and victim support services. In the Western Cape, DSD authorises caseworkers to assist law enforcement screen potential adult victims of trafficking, and to facilitate identified victims’ initial access to essential services such as medical, shelter and psycho-social care.

Trafficking related contacts to the NHTH overall increased in 2022 to comprise 76.6% of all contacts, in contrast to 64.5% in 2021. Community members remain the highest number of caller types for the third consecutive year, accounting for 42.7% of contacts to the NHTH, demonstrating confidence from community members in reporting concerns to a non-law enforcement body. Crucially, 13.6% of contacts originated from government and law enforcement bodies compared to just 5.4% and 6.3% in 2021 and 2020 respectively. Building and strengthening partner networks in both government and civil society sectors has been a key strategy in 2022. This significant increase in contacts from government and law enforcement bodies communicates an increase in trust and confidence in the partnership and services offered by the NHTH.

The NHTH conducted 78 screenings of potential victims of human trafficking through the year, with 50 resulting in positive identifications. At least 17 of these identifications resulted from law enforcement or government-initiated contacts. Although the majority of reports involved female potential victims, reports of male victims increased from only 5.4% in 2021 to 20% this reporting year. This may be attributed to an increase in reports of labour trafficking. One such case involved a Chinese-owned
factory where Chinese nationals were trafficked for forced labour in South Africa. A full breakdown of this case as well as other victim demographics, recruitment tactics and other data insights can be found in the accompanying NHTH Report.

As highlighted throughout the report, vulnerability has only been exacerbated with the current economic climate in South Africa. The recruitment methods disclosed by victims identified this past year further substantiated this finding. False promises in the form of education, scholarships or travel and false job opportunities overwhelmingly constitute the majority of recruitment methods at 32% and 28% respectively. Notably, the percentage of recruitment via false job opportunities has increased annually since 2019. In an attempt to disrupt trafficking schemes using this tactic, the NHTH has offered a job vetting service since 2021, where the NHTH reviews employment opportunities upon request to assess possibly exploitative schemes. In 2022, the NHTH conducted 51 job vettings; 72.55% of all jobs vetted were found to have high risk factors and identified as either fraudulent or potentially related to trafficking.

SURVIVOR DEMOGRAPHICS
Of the new survivors entering A21’s care in 2022, South Africans comprised 88.2% with the remaining 11.8% being of Nigerian and Zimbabwean heritage. This contrasts with 2021 where South Africans constituted 100% of new survivors. The 2022 data is far more consistent with pre-Covid-19 trends, and A21 expects this continued diversity of survivor nationality in coming years.

FREEDOM CENTRE INCREASES RETENTION OF SURVIVORS IN A21’S AFTERCARE PROGRAM
A21 launched its Freedom Centre in December 2020 and completed its second full year of operation in 2022. The presence of the centre continues to provide overwhelming evidence of its need and effectiveness. One issue encountered in many survivor assistance
programs is early or premature exit. Since the launch of the Freedom Centre, A21 has seen a marked decline in survivors exiting the program prematurely, i.e. before their goals for independence have been met. In 2022, only two survivors prematurely exited the program, a 60% decrease from the previous year where five survivors exited. Survivors transitioning out of A21’s Aftercare Program is significantly more favourable than ‘exits’ from the program. Those transition out after receiving effective services whereas ‘exits’ tend to occur suddenly, and without further contact, thereby increasing vulnerability to being retrafficked. Some of the survivors who transitioned out of care did so after stabilising and finding employment; still others transitioned out once they were ready to reintegrate and seek employment in their hometown fulfilling their ultimate goal from when they first entered A21’s Aftercare Program. Across the year, A21 was able to support this process by conducting six domestic relocations for survivors ready to return home.

Survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program continued to receive a range of direct services to achieve their ultimate goal of independence. A21 supported seven survivors with either emergency accommodation or other type of housing in one of A21’s apartments. After receiving critical accommodation assistance from A21, two survivors displayed significant growth and movement towards their personal goals when they moved into their own independent residence. Life Programs facilitated by caseworkers as part of the weekly program in the Freedom Centre were completed by 64.7% of survivors, compared to 29% in 2021. Access to vocational training also increased in 2022. In partnership with Sparrow Society’s Sew Boss Program, nine survivors completed a job training program. As a result of this training and other opportunities, 38.2% of survivors in the program (13 survivors) started new employment in 2022, compared to 29% (9) in 2021.

NHTH ASSISTS NATIONAL PROSECUTION AUTHORITY IDENTIFY TRAFFICKING VICTIMS FROM POTENTIAL SUSPECTS

The South African National Department of Social Development (DSD) sought the human trafficking expertise of the A21 operated NHTH, suspecting that two women from the Democratic Republic of Congo accused of smuggling were, in fact, victims of human trafficking. The National Prosecution Authority (NPA) had brought criminal charges against the women were involved in smuggling. However, a Director at the National DSD contacted the NHTH as a reliable authority on identifying victims of human trafficking, after review of the case supported the women may actually be victims. Upon screening the women, the NHTH identified elements of human trafficking; the women had been recruited via the promise of false jobs and had the intention to study in South Africa. Following their arrival in South Africa, the perpetrator subjected them to domestic servitude, for which they received no payment. The perpetrator restricted their freedom of movement, and they experienced constant physical, emotional and verbal abuse. The NHTH call specialists advocated on behalf of the women, sending a report to the investigating officer who reopened the case, and the NPA dismissed the smuggling charges. The two women are now being treated as victims of trafficking and are receiving aftercare services. Moreover, based on information provided by the victims, the prosecutor was able to bring trafficking charges against their actual trafficker.
ENDNOTES

2. The National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) is a dedicated service to support victims of human trafficking and provide advice and assistance on human trafficking issues. Operated by A21 South Africa, the NHTH works in partnership with law enforcement, key government entities and public sector partners across the region. The NHTH is available to receive reports of suspected trafficking 24 hours a day, seven days a week through calls and electronic means. Reports are handled by call specialists, specifically trained in the area of human trafficking.
4. The petrol price changes are as follows: R17.39 per litre in July 2021 to R26.74 per litre in July 2022.
8. Rape Crisis Trust Cape Town is a nonprofit organisation with the mission to promote safety in communities, to reduce the trauma experienced by rape survivors, to encourage the reporting of rape and to work actively to address flaws in legislation. One key aspect of their services is to provide counselling for anyone from the age of 14 years and upward who is affected by sexual violence – survivors and the people supporting them. https://rapecrisis.org.za/
9. SAMLIT is South Africa’s Anti-Money Laundering Integrated Task Force. It is South Africa’s first public private partnership, between the banking sector and government regulatory authorities, aimed at enhancing collaboration and coordination in combating financial crime, money laundering and terrorist financing.
11. Recruitment by a “perceived liberator/benefactor” occurs where a perpetrator promises to liberate someone from exploitation, harm, or hardship, only to then exploit them.
12. Sparrow Society is a nonprofit based in Cape Town, working to create viable and dignifying economic opportunities for women in a range of industries including textiles manufacturing, promotional products and even coffee.https://sparrowsociety.co.za/
ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

The National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) in South Africa is a dedicated service that supports victims of human trafficking and provides advice and assistance on human trafficking issues. Operated by A21 South Africa (A21), the NHTH works in partnership with law enforcement, key government entities, and public sectors across South Africa. The NHTH is available to receive reports of suspected trafficking 24 hours a day, seven days a week, through phone calls and electronic means. Reports are handled by call specialists specifically trained in the area of human trafficking, utilising a trauma-informed and victim-centred approach. Call specialists are equipped to respond to calls in English, Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, Afrikaans and Shona, plus an additional 230 languages through a tele-interpreting service. The NHTH also offers a ‘job vetting’ service through which call specialists research potential job opportunities to determine their validity. The NHTH then provides potential applicants with feedback on their research findings, as well as safety advice to avoid being defrauded or otherwise exploited.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRENDS IN 2022

False job opportunities remain the most prevalent recruitment method for the third straight year. Of the human trafficking cases reported to the NHTH in 2022, 60% were confirmed trafficking cases involving recruitment by fraudulent means, either through false job opportunities or false promises. Recruitment through ‘false promises’ involves situations where traffickers lure victims into trafficking initially through promises to improve their current life circumstances. This type of recruitment can manifest in several ways so long as a victim leaves home to travel in reliance on that false promise. One victim confronted with health issues relocated to a different province under the belief that her medical expenses would be sponsored, only to be sex trafficked upon arrival. Other examples of false promises involve ‘free’ education opportunities such as scholarships or study abroad. The NHTH has received several requests to ascertain the validity of a number of study opportunities and scholarships.

Reports to the NHTH showcase a pattern of traffickers using the recession and economic instability in South Africa to lure desperate South Africans with employment opportunities which are actually exploitative. The South African government department ‘Statistics South Africa’ (Stats SA) released data that revealed that by the fourth quarter of 2022, 7.8 million persons in South Africa were unemployed and actively seeking employment. In 2022, the NHTH researched 51 ‘job vetting’ requests of potential employment opportunities with 37 (72.6%) determined to be fraudulent.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The NHTH received 3,374 CONTACTS IN 2022
- 76.6% of contacts were HUMAN TRAFFICKING RELATED, an 18.7% increase from 2021
- SEX TRAFFICKING remained the most common form of exploitation reported at 49.5%
- MALES accounted for 20% of confirmed cases, an increase from 5.3% reported in 2021
- 391 POTENTIAL VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING were reported to the NHTH
- 42.7% of all contacts were from the GENERAL PUBLIC
- 35.5% of contacts to the NHTH originated from GAUTENG PROVINCE, with 30.9% from the WESTERN CAPE
- 72.6% of all jobs vetted were identified as FRAUDULENT
- The NHTH identified and assisted 50 VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING
- 60% of trafficking victims identified were recruited by FALSE PROMISES OR JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Contacts to the National Human Trafficking Hotline comprise all incoming enquiries to the NHTH through any means, including but not limited to phone calls, emails, SMS and online web submissions. These enquiries include all reports on potential human trafficking, various crimes both related and unrelated to human trafficking, and queries about human trafficking generally, as well as requests for various types of assistance related to human trafficking, such as safety planning or job vetting.

Reports’ only include contacts to the South African National Human Trafficking Hotline relating to a potential human trafficking situation.

The statistics below are exclusively drawn from substantive contacts made to the NHTH from January - December 2022 concerning human trafficking matters. This report is not a reflection of all substantive calls to the NHTH which may include calls related to other high-risk crimes, labour exploitation, and other non-trafficking issues.

Disaggregated data has been collected on each individual case based on descriptive factors including gender, age, type of trafficking, methods of control and recruitment methods. The data contained herein is based on the cases where the information was available. In the majority of cases, the call specialists were unable to glean full or specific details about the case. Therefore the data below is based on cases where the specified information was made available.
OVERVIEW OF DATA²
In 2022, the NHTH received 3,374 contacts via phone, email, SMS and online web submissions. The number of contacts related to human trafficking increased by 18.7% from 2021 to 7.6.6% indicating an increase in the understanding of the NHTH’s purpose and its services. Consistent with prior years, contacts decreased towards the end of the year as the holidays approached.

The above chart reflects the number of contacts to the Hotline.

CALLER DEMOGRAPHICS
The general public account for the highest percentage (42.7%) of contacts to the NHTH, suggesting community members’ comfort with reporting human trafficking-related matters to a non-law enforcement body. Other explanations may include the willingness of the NHTH to accept anonymous reports and a lack of public confidence in local law enforcement. Unfortunately, there is a general fear of official complicity. Moreover, in several cases reported to the NHTH, victims have faced obstacles or a lack of support when reporting suspected trafficking cases directly to the local police station.

Throughout 2022, the NHTH focused on building relationships and networking with partner organisations and local law enforcement. As a result, there has been a 151.9% increase in contacts from law enforcement and government departments, as well as a 49.3% increase in contacts from the non-governmental organisation (NGO) sector compared with 2021. This second consecutive increase for these groups since 2020 amounts to a 78.7% overall increase from 2020 to 2022. This is a result of an increased focus on partnerships both with long-standing partners of the NHTH network as well as establishing new relationships within the civil society sector and key government stakeholders across all nine provinces in South Africa and neighbouring countries. This concentrated focus has directly contributed to the increase in referrals to the NHTH and resulted in more victim identifications in 2022.

VICTIM DEMOGRAPHICS
Three hundred ninety-one potential victims were reported to the NHTH in 2022 across 110 human trafficking cases. Call specialists screened each report to identify elements of human trafficking and, as a result, directly assisted 50 confirmed victims out of trafficking situations. Once victims are identified, the NHTH refers the individual to A21 aftercare or the appropriate partner services provided in each province. Seventeen of the 50 survivors assisted out of trafficking in 2022 entered A21’s Aftercare Program.

AGE AND GENDER
Traffickers in South Africa continue to prey on women and children, some of the most vulnerable groups in the country. A common theme emerged in reported cases involving minors in 2022; families forced their children to work to provide for their household, a possible reflection of the current economic circumstances in South Africa. For example, two foreign national minors from a neighbouring African country were sent by their parents to work in Gauteng with...

‘As coordinator of the Child Protection Empowerment Programme, I am grateful for the A21 hotline where members of our community can report concerns with regards to child trafficking as well as for the collaboration with A21 around particular cases. The hotline is a vital service in countering human trafficking and mobilising relevant services for human trafficking victims. Our hope is that the hotline will grow from strength to strength’.

-Mariëtte Jacobs, Managing Director, Ezrah Community Training and Development
the understanding they would receive wages for their family’s basic needs. However, upon arrival, the siblings were forced to sell bread without pay, and subjected to abuse by their perpetrator.

Although the majority of victims reported to the NHTH remain female, there has been a rise in the number of male victims reported. In the current reporting year, males accounted for 20% of confirmed cases, which is a significant increase from the 5.3% reported in 2021. This is likely a result from an increase in labour exploitation related cases being reported as men have typically been more the commonly reported victims of labour rather than sex trafficking. For example, the NHTH received a forced labour tip where a man was forced to work on a farm in a small town in the Western Cape. He was unpaid and received only sufficient food for one meal a day. The NHTH conducted a telephonic screening, before referring the case to the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), the Department of Social Development (DSD), as well as the Department of Labour (DOL), who extracted the victim and found him safe accommodation. Through this report, the NHTh became aware of more widespread labour trafficking in this town and was able to utilise this situation to build relationships with different stakeholders there. These relationships ultimately led to an opportunity to host an awareness event in that community on human trafficking generally, and more specifically in recognising trafficking.

**VICTIM NATIONALITY**

In 2022, South Africans constituted the majority (69.13%) of victims reported to the NHTH. Nonetheless, there has been a surge in reports of foreign national victims, consistent with pre-COVID-19 trends, with reports of victims recruited from different countries including China, Zimbabwe, Congo and Nigeria.

In November 2022, the DPCI requested the NHTh’s assistance in screening a large number of Chinese nationals discovered working in a factory, for labour exploitation. The factory that housed more than 50 Chinese nationals primarily specialised in producing steel resources for various machinery and construction equipment. More than 50 Chinese nationals worked either to maintain the machinery or as cleaners at the factory.

The NHHT call specialists screened a total of 32 potential Chinese victims, willing to be interviewed, using a tele-interpreting service and discovered the potential victims were either recruited through a company in China or heard about this factory position in South Africa from family or friends. The potential victims worked between nine and twelve hours a day, and lived in crowded, unhygienic dorms designed for one or two people, with at least five other people. A senior employer purchased food for the workers, but the workers were required to seek permission to eat. Pay was unequally distributed, and workers were forced to remain in the factory even when there was a pause in the available work. Although the employer promised to arrange their return to China, the employer withheld their visas and passports, preventing them from leaving the situation.

Many of the potential victims appeared apprehensive during the screening and provided limited information. Based on the limited information provided, the NHHT ultimately identified at least ten victims of trafficking. Although services were offered to the ten confirmed victims, they expressed a reluctance to be separated from the other potential victims, and declined direct services. Consequently all the victims and potential victims were detained and deported back to China.

**EXPLOITATION TYPE**

While sex trafficking remained the most common form of exploitation reported to the NHHT accounting for 49.5% of all cases reported, it decreased from 2021 when it constituted 55.5% of cases. Forced labour accounted for 7.3% of cases reported in 2022, an increase from 5.5% from the prior year. Domestic servitude cases reported to the NHHT rose to 3.7% in 2022, a significant increase from only 0.7% reported in the previous year. Vulnerable individuals desperate for employment accept opportunities only to later discover themselves in an exploitative situation. In 2022, a case was reported to the NHHT regarding a woman recruited from South Africa to the Middle East to work as a domestic worker. Upon arrival, she was assigned to a family and worked for them for a few months. She worked long hours without pay, had no access to health care, and was not regularly provided food. Upon expressing her desire to leave, she was told of her obligation to repay the cost for her travel. She eventually received money from her family to give to her ‘employer’ so she could leave. Upon her return to South Africa, the NHHT provided the survivor with a referral for direct services.

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**Bar Graph: Victim Nationality**

- South Africa: 271
- DR Congo: 1
- Cameroon: 1
- China: 50
- USA: 4
- Brazil: 20
- South Africa: 1
- Nigeria: 4
- Thailand: 1
- Tanzania: 25
- Unknown: 9
- Zimbabwe: 1

**Pie Chart: Exploitation Type**

- Sex Trafficking: 49.5%
- Domestic Servitude: 7.3%
- Organ Harvesting: 0.9%
- Sex and Labour Trafficking: 2.8%
- Not Specified: 34.9%
Traffickers use various methods to control a victim recruited into a trafficking situation. Data captured by the NHTH show the most prevalent methods of control to be sexual abuse (34%), induced substance abuse (10%), isolation (16%) and the withholding or destruction of documents (24%). In all confirmed sex trafficking cases reported to the NHTH, perpetrators forced victims to take drugs before forcing them to participate in commercial sex. Consequently, victims often form a drug dependency, thereby compelling them to remain in the exploitative situation.

Withholding and destruction of victims’ documents as a method of control, most commonly utilised by traffickers in labour exploitation cases, has increased by 352.8% in 2022. This significant increase is most likely a result of the increase in labour trafficking cases reported to the NHTH. Through withholding of documents, primarily of foreign national victims, traffickers are able to increase their control of victims. Victims are restricted not only from returning to their home country, but also from moving freely in the country of exploitation, hindering their ability to seek assistance or escape.

The adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the South African economy since 2019, has caused a significant number of job losses and a lack of employment opportunities. Traffickers have been deceiving individuals with false job opportunities to lure them into an exploitative situation. Based on data from confirmed human trafficking cases, false promises (32%) and false job opportunities (28%) are the most prevalent recruitment methods. The percentage of recruitment based on false promises has increased by 102.5% since 2021. The NHTH has seen a wide-array of false job opportunities, including modelling, call centre agents, administrative roles as well as domestic worker jobs.

The most prevalent provinces traffickers recruit from remain Gauteng (35.5%) and Western Cape (30.9%). The NHTH has noted a common trend in 2022 whereby victims are recruited from various regions throughout South Africa and specifically brought to Brooklyn, Western Cape to be sex trafficked. In 2022 alone, the NHTH handled six cases involving sex trafficking of victims recruited from provinces such as Gauteng, North West, and Mpumalanga and brought to the Brooklyn area of Cape Town.

South African (22.3%) and Nigerian (19.6%) perpetrators continue to account for the highest number of suspected traffickers in cases reported to the NHTH. A 42% increase in South African perpetrators compared to 2021 may be linked to the rise in cases involving victims sold by family members. In confirmed cases of trafficking, there has been a 100% increase in victims sold by family members compared to 2021. These cases primarily occurred in poverty-stricken communities where families lacking resources for basic necessities, ultimately sold their children to gang members in their local community.
NEW YEAR’S EVE INTERVENTION

On New Year’s Eve of 2021, the NHTH received a third-party tip regarding a sexually exploited minor female. The information provided in the tip advised a 17-year-old girl minor victim into travelling to an apartment in Gauteng province where traffickers were operating an illegal brothel. There, the minor victim was forced to engage in commercial sex acts by her trafficker, a Nigerian man. In addition to being trafficked in the illegal brothel, the trafficker also trafficked the minor victim in night clubs. The trafficker held her in an apartment where she had no freedom of movement, was abused regularly, and was forced to take drugs before being sold for sex.

According to the third-party tip, they feared official complicity as the traffickers, also alleged drug dealers, had been arrested multiple times but had been released each time due to what the caller believed was bribery. The NHTH reported the case to the DPCI, the law enforcement entity responsive to complaints of official complicity. The DPCI responded immediately by conducting a raid of the premises within a day or two of being contacted by the NHTH, where they arrested four perpetrators. During the raid, not only did the DPCI safely extract the minor victim, but also discovered another adult victim of sex trafficking. Both victims were thereafter placed in shelters, and the four perpetrators were charged with contravening the Trafficking in Persons Act 7 of 2013 for sexual exploitation.

ENDNOTES

2 To ensure data integrity, the data presented is extracted from reports submitted to the NHTH consisting of those identified as victims and likely potential victims of trafficking. This report takes a conservative approach in presenting hotline data and analysis, omitting reports of potential victims of human trafficking which were unable to be minimally substantiated.
3 Isolation may include physical isolation or deprivation of liberty, denying access to medical support, surveillance or control of the victim in public, and isolating the victim by moving them frequently from place to place.

As a service situated to support those in exploitative situations, the South African National Human Trafficking Hotline is at the forefront of understanding emerging human trafficking trends in South Africa. Each year the NHTH commits to expanding its networks and partners across South Africa to ensure that an accurate scope of trafficking is reflected in the data collected. The NHTH welcomes new partners interested in counter human trafficking efforts in South Africa. Partnerships are vital not only to provide services to identified trafficking survivors and communities requesting training, but also to increase awareness about the services provided by the NHTH across South Africa.

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The observations contained in this report are limited to information communicated to the NHTH during the reporting period. Nothing arising from the data should be interpreted as showing the full extent or prevalence of human trafficking in South Africa.
Human trafficking in the Kingdom of Thailand ('Thailand') continues to be a complex issue, with victims from diverse demographics being exploited both domestically and abroad, across various sectors. These demographics include both children and adults, Thai nationals and foreign victims (primarily from neighbouring nations), trafficked domestically and around the region. Victims are often trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation, as well as for more newly emerging forms of trafficking, including forced marriage, online exploitation and forced scamming.

A21 Thailand ('A21') works nationally to counter human trafficking through public awareness, prevention and education efforts; intervention efforts in collaboration with law enforcement; and direct aftercare services and legal assistance to survivors. Given the nature of human trafficking in the region, A21 also provides child-centred resources specifically tailored to the unique characteristics and challenges children encounter, including through A21’s Child Advocacy Centre (CAC), which employs a victim-centred approach with minor survivors. A21 continues to collaborate with government ministries, law enforcement and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) on prevention and awareness initiatives, professional training, legal assistance, and aftercare and survivor services.

In 2022, the Thai Government continued strengthening partnerships with NGOs, increasing investigations, planning and implementing the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) with a new reflection period extension, and creating new Standard Operating Procedures for victim identification of labour trafficking. As a result of the Thai Government’s significant progress with its counter-trafficking efforts, Thailand was upgraded from Tier 2 watch list to Tier 2 on the United States, Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TIP) 2022 Report.

The TIP report indicates that over the past five years, the demographic profile of victims of trafficking in Thailand has been diverse in nationalities, age, gender and citizenship status. A21 has observed similar trends with male and female victims originating from Myanmar, Cambodia and within Thailand, ranging from 14 to 35 years of age. Victims often experience exploitation in the forms of debt-based coercion, false job opportunities, retention of identification documents or travel documents, reduced wage, physical violence, denied freedom of movement, and overtime work hours without compensation.

NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND GLOBAL EVENTS - 2022 TRENDS

Thailand’s upper middle income status and geographic location to neighbouring lower middle income nations make Thailand a prime destination, source and transit country for human trafficking. The desire for better working conditions and income, combined with increased urbanisation that demands cheap labour, makes forced labour the predominant form of trafficking in Thailand, in industries such as commercial fishing, agriculture, manufacturing, domestic work, and street begging. Moreover, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, A21 observed an increase in labour trafficking victims recruited through online methods. Additionally, gender inequality and cultural values are identified as factors contributing to sex trafficking in Thailand, particularly relating to minors, and the expectations for girls to provide support to their parents and families.

A21’S RESPONSE

With the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, A21 operations in areas of prevention, intervention and restoration also increased in Thailand. A21 hosted its annual Walk For Freedom (WFF) in Bangkok and Pattaya while continuing the Tuk-Tuk Awareness Campaign. Legal assistance and professional training were conducted in person. A21 began providing in-person aftercare services, along with the continuation of remote support. Government agencies and NGOs working against human trafficking expressed interest in collaborating with A21 in prevention efforts. In 2022, A21, amongst other government agencies and NGOs, signed an MOU with the Office of Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Tourism and Sports to launch the ‘Child Safe Friendly Tourism Project’ to promote a safe and child-friendly environment in the tourism industry. This project aims to develop a human trafficking and exploitation training curriculum for businesses in tourism in Thailand. Furthermore, A21 formed new working relationships with significant actors in the anti-human trafficking sphere, such
as the Ministry of Labour, other anti-trafficking NGOs, IOM, and Children and Women Protection Centres.

**PREVENTION & AWARENESS**

In partnership with the Thai Government, partner NGOs and law enforcement agencies, A21 continued to focus its human trafficking prevention and awareness efforts with vulnerable groups, including children (both in and out of school), and disadvantaged and rural communities. New initiatives and existing efforts were implemented by A21, while responding to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its challenges. These efforts include continued awareness campaigns like the Can You See Me? (CYSM) campaign, the Tuk-Tuk campaign, WFF and promotion of A21’s digital safety resources in collaboration with government agencies.

The impact of A21’s prevention and awareness efforts in 2022 was very positive, reaching 11,842 children and 28,031 adults. Additionally, 11,765 awareness and 699 prevention materials were distributed to communities. A21’s CYSM campaign continues to be used as a public awareness campaign in Thailand to address sex trafficking, labour trafficking, and exploitation of children while promoting the Thai 1300 social assistance hotline number. CYSM brochures were distributed to schools, communities, government shelters, churches, businesses and universities. A21 facilitated educational sessions with 214 partners, including teachers, NGO staff and government officials from the Thailand Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS). Feedback during these sessions, including by community members, evinced an increased understanding and ability to identify trafficking and exploitation. Community leaders also reported feeling more equipped to recognise human trafficking in their own communities.

**PILOTING A NEW SERIOUS DIGITAL GAME - THE EVAC COMPUTER GAME**

As online recruitment and exploitation of children continued to grow, A21 responded with an innovative approach to raising awareness amongst children through the creation of a computer game. A21, in partnership with The University of Kent, ECPAT International, PlayerThree Games and the University of Stirling, developed a Digital Game as part of the End Violence Against Children (EVAC) grant project. The EVAC Computer Game titled ‘May and Bay: A serious game for a serious issue: combatting online child sexual exploitation and trafficking via a digital game’ is designed for children aged 8-14, using age-appropriate tools to educate children about online safety, and is contextualised specifically for Cambodia and Thailand. In 2022, A21 piloted the game at four schools and two student camps, reaching more than 1,200 children. A21 also provided specialised facilitator training for the EVAC game for more than 180 facilitators.

A21 also collaborated with the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) to promote the EVAC computer game at the ‘SX Sustainability Expo 2022’, ASEANS’s largest sustainability expo, hosted in Bangkok at Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre. A21 presented at one of the sessions and hosted an interactive booth. Over 200,000 individuals were present, including children and adults, representing schools, businesses, NGOs and government ministries, many of whom engaged with A21’s booth to learn more about the EVAC game and A21’s work.

**TUK-TUK CAMPAIGN**

The Tuk-Tuk campaign began in 2021, when COVID-19 restrictions prevented public gatherings, resulting in the cancellation of WFF, A21’s annual global awareness event. The campaign focused on raising awareness about human trafficking and promoting the three main anti-trafficking hotlines in Thailand: 1191 Anti-Trafficking in Persons (ATPD) Division of the Royal Thai Police (RTP) Hotline, 1202 DSI and the 1300 Social Assistance Centre Hotline under MSDHS. In 2022, key anti-human trafficking partners from both government and nonprofit sectors once again joined A21’s Tuk-Tuk campaign. Notable agencies include MSDHS, the Anti-Trafficking Police Division of the RTP and DSI. A total of 32 tuk-tuks operated around central Bangkok for the entire month of September, promoting trafficking awareness messages and three national anti-trafficking hotlines.
WALK FOR FREEDOM (WFF)

In 2022 with the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, A21 hosted WFF in two locations (Bangkok and Pattaya), with more than 470 participants, and distributed over 1,200 CYSM flyers. At the Bangkok WFF event, A21 invited both the general public and key allies in the government sectors, including MSDHS, DSI, ATPD of the RTP and representatives from U.S. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). In Pattaya, A21 received support from Pattaya’s City Hall, which provided the venue, equipment and the designated walking route. The Deputy Mayor of Pattaya City, Chonburi MSDHS, Children and Women Protection Centre and the RTP of Region 2 also supported the Pattaya WFF.

PRIMARY PREVENTION PROGRAM

As part of A21’s preventative response to minors being trafficked, A21 developed the Primary Prevention Program (PPP). The PPP is a three-session program designed for children ages 6-12 that can be facilitated in community and school settings. In 2022, A21 provided online facilitator training on the PPP for 232 educators and staff working with children across Thailand, including staff at five schools, two churches and two government shelters for victims of trafficking. These facilitators were able to implement the PPP in their own schools and communities, reaching 778 children. A21 also conducted facilitator training with Nongprue and Banglamung municipalities, incorporating the CYSM campaign materials, reaching 172 children.

As part of its national prevention strategy, A21 fosters long-term relationships with local schools, partnering across all age levels and utilising multiple resources. To date, A21 has an ongoing relationship with six schools that implement the PPP annually.

IDENTIFICATION & INTERVENTION

A21’s victim identification and intervention efforts involve participating in victim identification operations in collaboration with local and international law enforcement, utilising the CAC model in Pattaya to provide comprehensive support to survivors in need of assistance and training frontline professionals likely to encounter victims of trafficking through their profession.

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRE

A21 established its CAC in Pattaya in 2017 as a one-stop service centre for potential child victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, offering a trauma-informed, victim-centred approach specifically tailored to children’s unique characteristics and challenges. Services provided at the CAC include child forensic interviews, psychosocial support and legal services. Multidisciplinary teams of social services providers, law enforcement and NGO social workers can utilise the CAC to strategise interventions and collaborate to ensure victims and family members are fully supported throughout the entire legal process.

In 2022, six victims of trafficking were identified using A21’s CAC in collaboration with government agencies and other NGOs. In these cases, A21 conducted in-person and online screenings and swiftly assisted these groups of survivors with immediate legal and aftercare support. The CAC also facilitated training workshops for professionals in various sectors, including local educators, government ministries, hospitality staff, legal professionals, and other NGOs.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Throughout 2022, A21 provided nine training sessions to 488 frontline professionals working in government social services, local and international law enforcement agencies such as DSI and ATPD, local NGOs, education and the hospitality industry. These trainings included identifying potential human trafficking cases/victims, supporting roles of NGOs in child exploitation investigations, facilitating forensic interviews, incentivising a victim-centred approach in the criminal justice system, and properly reporting and responding to suspected trafficking. In addition to equipping professionals with these skills, training engagements also provide opportunities for further collaboration between stakeholders, with best practices at the forefront.
A21 facilitated a training session with 43 hotel workers, with participants reporting that the prevention materials had helped them better understand how to identify potential victims of trafficking. A21 also facilitated a training session with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Bangkok Legal Attaché Office on the ‘NGO’s role in child exploitation investigations and facilitation of forensic interviews’ to over 70 law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, child protection officers and NGO professionals from 12 countries across Southeast and South Asia. In addition, A21 also collaborated with HSI Bangkok Office to provide a joint frontline professional training to 25 DSI Bureau of Human Trafficking Crimes officers on child development, memory and trauma, trauma-informed and victim-centred investigations, and an introduction to forensic interviews. In this training, A21 assisted HSI to contextualise the training into the Thai legal framework and highlighted the benefit of collaboration with NGOs during the victim identification and investigation process.

A21 both leads and assists local and international law enforcement in victim identification operations, which often leads to engagement with A21’s Aftercare and Legal Assistance Programs. In 2022, A21 participated in a victim identification operation with a multidisciplinary team (MDT) consisting of law enforcement, social services and immigration, which resulted in confirmation of child labour exploitation. Utilising A21’s CAC, members of the MDT convened to discuss and strategise an intervention plan that is both victim-centred and child-friendly, leading to a successful identification of a child victim. In addition, in collaboration with A21 Cambodia, A21 Thailand supported one adult and one child victim of trafficking and exploitation from Cambodia to initiate legal and judicial proceedings in Thailand against their perpetrators. In one case, A21 invited Thai and Cambodian MDT officials to meet in person and collaboratively work together, including speaking to the victim at the CAC. A21 ensured the use of a victim-centred and trauma-informed approach to ensure proper support of the potential victim throughout the entire process.

A21 provides comprehensive trauma-informed aftercare services for survivors of trafficking, according to each individual’s needs, to assist them at each stage of their progression from crisis intervention to restoration and independence. In total, A21 assisted 41 survivors in its Aftercare Program in 2022, with 13 survivors entering the program, nearly doubling the number of new survivors from 2021 (seven). In previous years, A21 has primarily supported Thai female survivors of sexual exploitation aged between 18-25 and 14-17 (minors), many recruited through false job opportunities with others deceived by friends and family, as well as supporting minor survivors as young as infants from neighbouring nations trafficked for forced begging. In 2022 however, A21 observed a shift in the main demographic of survivors assisted due to the increase in labour trafficking cases attributed to the emergence of scamming crime in the region, with the majority of the survivors in A21 Thailand’s Aftercare Program being men aged between 18-25 (46.2%). All the male survivors assessed shared one common factor - the lack of formal education. This demographic shift from previous years is likely a result of the increase in referrals of victims of scamming in the region, rather than a decrease in the other forms of trafficking.

Survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program were primarily trafficked through forced labour (46.2%), with false job opportunities continuing as the primary recruitment method (69.2%). The forms of exploitation experienced by the remaining survivors who entered the program in 2022 included sexual exploitation (7.6%), child sexual exploitation (23.1%) and bonded labour (23.1%). Survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program expressed that some of the control tactics used included debt bondage, restricted freedom of movement, and the withholding of identification documents. Many survivors also experienced some form of physical abuse and threat of physical harm as a method of control.

The forms of trafficking experienced by the survivors in 2022 included sexual exploitation (7.6%), child sexual exploitation (23.1%) and bonded labour (23.1%). Additionally, 46.2% of the survivors were trafficked for forced labour.
lack local resources, caseworkers may face challenges in delivering regular services. To navigate these challenges, online platforms such as video calls and online group meetings have assisted in providing more comprehensive remote support. In 2022, A21 facilitated the first online peer support Life Program, Freedom to Flourish, which aims to assist survivors in flourishing, connecting, and supporting each other in their restoration and journey towards independence. Through an online group, four survivors met virtually for the duration of the 10-session program to build an online community across different regions of Thailand.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

A21 consistently serves as a bridge between law enforcement, prosecutors, social services, and survivors in providing comprehensive legal support services. In 2022, A21 assisted with 22 criminal prosecution and defence cases involving 35 survivors with its Legal Assistance Program. The majority of cases involved sex trafficking, labour trafficking or child sexual exploitation offenses. Eight perpetrators were convicted, sentenced to a combined total of 27 years, and ordered to pay compensation totalling 1.2 million Thai Baht (approximately $34,000 USD) to survivors. A21 Legal Assistance Program includes coordination with law enforcement, prosecutors and contracting attorneys to represent survivors in major legal proceedings; trial preparation; accompanying survivors and family members to testify before law enforcement and in court; pursuing civil restitution for survivors; as well as ensuring survivors receive holistic support and full access to justice.

In 2022, A21 observed an increase in survivors prosecuted for crimes they were forced to commit while trafficked or exploited, as well as an increasing number of defamation cases against survivors for pursuing a legal case against their alleged traffickers. In response, A21 continued to tirelessly advocate for these survivors by contracting attorneys for legal representation, working actively with the survivors and their families to provide legal guidance and while pursuing legal defences.

A21 also observed that the traffickers of survivors in our women), with the exception of online scamming cases where traffickers’ nationalities are unconfirmed but likely East Asian or South East Asian (not Thai). In A21’s observation, many of the traffickers involved across all cases in Thailand had not completed higher education or formal schooling. Some traffickers had families to support. Typically, traffickers operated in groups with divided responsibilities, such as recruiters, handlers, establishment managers, distributors and security guards. These traffickers also used online platforms for recruitment. Social media remains the primary platform for advertising false job opportunities with high salaries, in which Facebook was the most frequently cited channel for recruitment.
APINYA'S JOURNEY: FROM CRISIS TO INDEPENDENCE

Apinya* grew up in central Thailand with her family. Like many other young teenagers, Apinya spent her time on social media. It was during this time that she caught the attention of an older man. After being groomed with false promises, the older man ultimately enticed Apinya to have sex with him. Unbeknownst to Apinya, the older man recorded, uploaded and distributed sexually explicit footage of her across various social media sites. Apinya’s classmates discovered the online video clips, causing her considerable distress and leading her to relocate to a different school.

As Apinya relocated, the RTP received a tip regarding a social media page with child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Following this discovery, a multidisciplinary team was formed, including law enforcement task forces, social services and representatives from A21. An investigation by law enforcement resulted in successfully identifying the minors featured in the CSAM, including Apinya. As a result of this investigation, Apinya was provided government protection and safe accommodation and later referred to A21 for ongoing legal support and aftercare services.

With the assistance of A21, Apinya received holistic aftercare support, including the provision of basic needs, education assistance, and life skills training. Additionally, Apinya was provided extensive legal support throughout the entire process, including support as she gave her testimony to law enforcement and coordination with prosecutors. Apinya steadily improved her social support, reconnecting with family and friends, and enrolled in a program to continue her education. Throughout this journey, Apinya demonstrated remarkable resilience and growth, which allowed her to testify against her perpetrator. The court ultimately convicted her perpetrator and sentenced him to 13 years imprisonment. In 2022, Apinya transitioned out of A21’s Aftercare Program and received a scholarship to enrol in university.

ENDNOTES

4 Ibid.
A21 USA (A21) works nationally throughout the United States to counter trafficking through public awareness, prevention, and education efforts. While A21 provides direct services to survivors of human trafficking throughout various parts of the United States, the full gambit of its aftercare programs is offered primarily in North Carolina (A21 NC), and its surrounding regions, as well as in the Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas (A21 TX) area. Through A21’s direct work with trafficking survivors, as well as intervention efforts in collaboration with law enforcement, A21 has had the opportunity to directly observe the evolving human trafficking patterns in specific regions of the United States. Sex trafficking and labor trafficking remained the most common forms of trafficking observed by A21 in the United States in 2022.

2022 TRENDS

INCREASE IN FOREIGN NATIONAL SURVIVORS
In 2022, A21 engaged primarily with domestic sex trafficking survivors and with foreign national survivors from Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico. Many of these survivors shared similar vulnerability factors; they originate from a rural region and face extreme socio-economic challenges, resulting in an exceedingly low number of employment opportunities.

Consistent with the increase of migrants entering the United States from its southern border, A21 experienced an increase in its encounters with foreign national survivors requesting assistance. A21 received 55 referrals for assistance for potential foreign national victims who had migrated from the southern border; 17 of these individuals were referred to services with A21 partners and 33 entered A21’s Aftercare Program. Victims from the southern border encountered by A21 most commonly traveled to the United States either to pursue employment or to flee unsafe conditions within their home country.

Foreign Nationals Trafficked Along Migration Route
Many of the Latin American trafficking survivors encountered by A21 were the financial providers of their household, resulting in high pressure for employment. These victims often pursued employment without first determining whether the opportunity could be exploitative. Other Latin American survivors migrated to the United States to flee attempted gang recruitment, violence, or threats. Usually, exposure to violence in combination with a lack of job opportunities in their communities leads to the decision to seek employment and safety in the United States. However, these vulnerable individuals are often exploited along the way, or soon after arriving in the United States. Fifty percent of the Latin American foreign national survivors who entered A21’s Aftercare Program in 2022 had been trafficked during their journey to the United States. Some of these survivors had also been trafficked through gangs in their home country, often for sex or forced drug trafficking, prior to their migration journey.

The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) receives reports of migrants in need of assistance from their hotline as well as from referrals from U.S. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), U.S. Health and Human Services, and similar government agencies. USCRI regularly refers migrants in the surrounding areas in and around Charlotte, North Carolina and Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas to A21 for assistance, upon determining that the migrants had likely been trafficked. A21 assists eligible migrant victims of trafficking with access to legal services to apply for a T-Visa (trafficking visa) whenever possible.

Recruiters Target Victims in Their Home Country
In A21’s experience, quite often the recruiter of foreign national survivors exploited in the United States is an acquaintance or a community member of the survivor in their home country. Consequently, despite lack of employment or work conditions verification or detailed information, the vulnerable individual has a preexisting level of trust in the recruiter. This especially applies to those who legally enter the United States on H2A or H2B visas, specific to agriculture and seasonal employment. Employers exploit migrant workers’ ignorance of their rights under these valid visas to keep them fearful and powerless about their legal status.

INCREASE IN LABOR TRAFFICKING PROSECUTIONS
While A21 assisted some foreign national survivors of sexual
exploitation, including through online means, the majority were exploited through labor trafficking, primarily in the agricultural sector, and as domestic workers. A21 has observed a notable increase of labor trafficking survivors referred to A21’s Aftercare Program, as well as an increase in federal labor trafficking prosecutions generally in 2022.

The majority of labor trafficking survivors assisted by A21 had a similar profile - foreign nationals; limited education; originating from smaller or rural areas; and exploited in their search for employment as their household’s primary provider. In 2022, A21 supported labor trafficking survivors who were key victim-witnesses in labor trafficking prosecutions in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

**RECRUITMENT METHODS**

**Domestic Sex Trafficking**

Domestic sex trafficking of both adult and minor females continues to be a widespread problem within the United States. Traffickers continued to use online websites that provide sexualized content such as “Only Fans,” or escort services such as “Skip the Games,” or even commonly known dating/chat websites, such as “Monkey,” to both recruit new victims as well as continue to sell their current victims.

The desire for a loving relationship and/or substance addiction has repeatedly surfaced as two common vulnerabilities shared by many female survivors of sex trafficking in the United States. The most prevalent ways domestic victims are recruited into sex trafficking are through the use of a false romantic relationship (i.e. loverboy), being tricked and/or sold by a friend or family member, and coercion through the use of an individual’s drug addiction. Often times, victims believe they are in a romantic relationship with their trafficker which mimics the dynamics found in a domestic violence relationship.

Substance misuse and dependency by adults are high-risk factors for being trafficked. Those with addictions have decreased inhibitions or rationale when presented with options that provide access to their addictive substance. For example, it is not unusual for victims to “agree” to engage in commercial sex where the trafficker receives all payments, in exchange for the trafficker supplying their drug of choice. The level of physical dependency on these substances (specifically opioids) can be so strong and the urge to avoid withdrawals so great, that victims will often forgo safety in response to that physical dependence. Traffickers who exploit this physical addiction have consequently “coerced” the commission of a commercial sex act.

**Trafficking of Foreign Nationals**

In A21’s experience, foreign national survivors of both sex and labor trafficking are primarily recruited through false employment opportunities, through loverboy scenarios, and through friends/family. The forms of control used by traffickers in these cases have not shifted much from previous years. They include withholding documents, threats to report to immigration/law enforcement, threats to family, debt bondage, providing illicit substances to victims, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and psychological abuse.

To best support the needs of these individuals, A21 has continued to build community between survivors after they have left their trafficking situations by fostering group programs that survivors have the choice to participate in beneficial skills and build a positive community.

**A21’S RESPONSE**

In response to the increase in foreign national survivors, namely Latin American survivors, being assisted in 2022, A21 increased its English-Spanish bilingual caseworkers to properly support survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program. Moreover, A21 provided educational sessions on safe migration contained in A21’s Primary Prevention Program (PPP) to children of adult trafficking survivors and child survivors who had migrated from the southern U.S. border into the United States. Given the continued communication with friends and family in their home countries, this educational information could serve to prevent future exploitation along this migration route. A21 staff in the United States continued its prevention work targeted to the vulnerable population in Latin American source countries by collaborating with A21’s Latin American office. Specifically, A21 trained non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Costa Rica and other Latin American countries to facilitate A21’s PPP with minor professionals were trained to outwork the PPP in Latin America along a migration route with at-risk children.

In addition to adapting resources to assist the increase in requests for assistance for Latin American foreign national survivors, A21 continued to outwork its counter-trafficking strategy by focusing on prevention and awareness, intervention, aftercare, and access to justice.
**PREVENTION & AWARENESS**

**EDUCATION CURRICULUM PILOTED**

A21 recognizes that through prevention/education efforts, entire families can be reached with messages promoting safety and awareness of potential trafficking situations. A key initiative for A21 in 2022 was the development and piloting of a K-12 Human Trafficking Education Curriculum, focusing on four lessons for each grade in the areas of: Rights and Responsibilities, Character Development, Relationship Boundaries, and Digital Safety. Over 1,300 educators throughout Texas, Michigan, and Florida received training on this curriculum. It is anticipated that these trained educational leaders will teach the curriculum to potentially 300,000+ students during the 2022-23 school year.

A21 also distributed over 2,000 digital and hard copy versions of another key prevention initiative, the “Steps To Staying Safe Storybook,” for 3-6 year olds. This storybook teaches preschoolers to recognize potentially dangerous individuals, unsafe situations, and learn different ways to identify help from a trusted adult.

**PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS**

A21’s Can You See Me? (CYSM) public awareness campaign (available in print and digital materials) educates both at-risk individuals and the general public on human trafficking and provides a call to action in response to suspected trafficking (See Appendix A). A21’s CYSM campaign continued to be advertised throughout the United States in 2022, in collaboration with partners and stakeholders, in airports, train stations, billboards, and in schools. As of the end of 2022, over 1 billion impressions were reported for this campaign in the United States.

In anticipation of the 2022 Super Bowl, A21 partnered with the It’s A Penalty Campaign to raise awareness about human trafficking through airports, hotels, Ubers, and AirBnBs in Los Angeles, California. An estimated 737.5 million people were likely reached with this campaign. Moreover, during the pendency of this campaign, the National Human Trafficking Hotline reported a 20% increase in calls, 14 missing children were identified, eight victims were identified and recovered, and 494 traffickers and sex buyers were arrested statewide.

A21 continued its annual global Walk For Freedom human trafficking awareness initiative in 2022, with 100 walk events taking place in 35 states across the United States. A host of a walk event in Austin, TX reported over 300 individuals participated in the walk. The host further shared, “We had a survivor share her story who now runs a nonprofit. We had her lead the walk route and she said afterward the experience of sharing her story was healing for her. Such a powerful day.”

**IDENTIFICATION & INTERVENTION**

A21 participates in law enforcement-led operations, supporting both sex trafficking and labor trafficking investigations. In Texas, A21 participated in eight operations as the primary victim service provider offering services to recovered victims. During these operations, A21 TX assists law enforcement by conducting screenings of potential victims of trafficking, as well as providing services to identified victims. These operations occurred both via street outreach and hotel outreach operations with law enforcement agencies including the Dallas Police Department, Arlington Police Department, and Tarrant County Sheriff’s Office. To date, A21 TX has assisted in the identification of twenty victims during law enforcement-led operations. Additionally, in both locations, A21 provides law enforcement with clothing and hygiene kits for detectives to distribute when they conduct their individual outreaches in high-risk areas.

A strategy for effective intervention is the need for individuals most likely to interact with victims due to their profession (frontline professionals) to be adequately trained to recognize human trafficking. To that end, A21 NC focused on creating a specialized training program for frontline professionals in 2022. The training is based on A21’s firsthand experience working with survivors and incorporates key trends, updates to relevant human trafficking laws, and practical steps to both identify and support victims of trafficking. In 2022, A21 provided professional training to over 400 members of the hospitality industry at major hotels in Los Angeles ahead of the Super Bowl, 230 legal professionals at a law school, 98 law enforcement personnel, and 25 health care providers.
AFTERCARE

LAUNCH OF THE TEXAS FREEDOM CENTER

At the start of 2022, A21 launched its second Freedom Center in the United States in Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas. The Freedom Center is a drop-in day center that provides survivors with a safe place to learn life skills, receive case management support, and be empowered with skills and resources to restore wellness, reintegrate safely back into society, and live independently.

A21’s first encounter with a survivor of trafficking typically occurs through one of three ways: a law enforcement-led operation, a referral from another service provider or agency, or a direct outreach to A21 for assistance. Depending on the type of referral, A21 will screen and assess the needs of each individual. Using this assessment, A21 creates a tailored case management plan specific to the survivor’s unique needs, to support the survivor’s goals.

In 2022, A21 TX assisted 140 potential victims of trafficking and accepted 40 survivors into its Aftercare Program, while A21 NC assisted 114 potential victims of trafficking and accepted 31 survivors into its Aftercare Program. Both locations in the United States have noted the increase of foreign national survivors receiving direct services from A21, with A21 TX receiving a significant amount of referrals for Latin American minor survivors. Additionally, A21 TX has observed the online recruitment of many survivors of domestic sex trafficking (e.g., dating apps, social media, etc.). To best respond to survivors’ needs in Texas, A21 has developed community-wide relationships ranging across law enforcement agencies, service providers, and other NGOs. These relationships have enabled A21 to respond holistically to the needs of referrals, regardless of whether or not the survivor(s) choose to participate in A21’s program long-term.

THE ROLE OF EMPLOYMENT IN PREVENTING REVICTIMIZATION

In A21’s experience, poverty and lack of healthy relationships are the primary factors that increase victimization. Survivors living below the poverty level may live in lower income areas with higher crime rates. With a limited number of employment opportunities that provide livable wages, additional sources of income are needed. Traffickers capitalize on this vulnerability by offering employment opportunities or otherwise promising financial assistance, which turn out to be exploitative. Additionally, a lack of healthy relationships and/or boundaries creates prime opportunities for traffickers to romantically lure individuals with an exploitative intent from the outset. Risk factors linked to unhealthy romantic relationships are addressed through case management support, access to counseling, building a supportive community, developing healthy self-worth, boundaries, and relationship skills through A21’s Life Programs, and teaching safety.

To address the risks associated with poverty, A21 assists survivors to reach financial independence through continuing education, vocational training, job search assistance, or offering interim financial assistance.

Understanding the importance of stable employment in reducing victimization, A21 specifically focuses on job readiness training and opportunities. In partnership with corporations such as Marriott International, A21 NC offered specialized training sessions on job skills and career paths to survivors at the Freedom Center. As a result of these targeted activities, as well as survivors’ own initiative, 19 survivors obtained new employment during 2022.

COMMON CHALLENGES

While direct services overall have generally stabilized following the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of counter-trafficking housing programs within the A21 NC and TX operating areas no longer accept clients. This has resulted in extremely limited options for emergency and transitional housing. Furthermore, inflation and rising housing costs have resulted in survivors’ difficulty obtaining long-term, independent housing. Although A21 partners with hotels and shelters for immediate/emergency housing, this is not a sustainable long-term option. The limited options for transitional and long-term independent housing will ultimately adversely affect a survivor’s successful transition to independence.

Survivors’ access to childcare also impacts their ability to transition fully to independence. A21 has primarily supported these needs through financial assistance for childcare for meetings or events. A21 works with survivors to help identify creative options for childcare and supports survivors’ decisions for their children. A21 also provides risk assessments and safety plans for some survivors facing intimate partner violence from non-traffickers after their trafficking situation. Through these safety plans, A21 connects survivors to the appropriate law enforcement or service providers and provides relocation support.

SURVIVORS COMPLETING A21’S AFTERCARE PROGRAM MAINTAIN INDEPENDENCE

In sum, 71 new survivors entered A21’s U.S. Aftercare Program in 2022, for a total of 119 survivors receiving assistance through A21’s long-term Aftercare Program. Utilizing the International Justice Mission’s Assessment of Survivor Outcomes (ASO) tool, A21 has been able to collect data on survivors’ functioning at the time of case intake, closure and one year follow-up. Results demonstrate that on average survivors...
are restored at case closure and that these survivors have maintained restoration and independence at one year follow-up.

The increase in consistent intakes into A21’s Restore program from 2021 to 2022 (97.2% increase), as well as graduations and transitions (260% increase), is due to A21’s second location launching in Texas. It is also in part related to the return to pre-COVID-19 pandemic protocols, including the reinstatement of A21 services from remote to in-person case management, the continuation of court cases and identification operations, as well as the return of other community service providers to pre-pandemic processes.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Access to justice is an important aspect of recovery for human trafficking survivors. A21 provides survivors in its Aftercare Program access to its Legal Assistance Program. Under this program, A21 supports survivors subpoenaed to testify in criminal prosecution proceedings against their trafficker, as well as coordinates access to legal services for other related matters such as expungement of criminal convictions, immigration assistance, and other civil matters. In 2022, 40 survivors participated in A21’s Legal Assistance Program.

CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS

A21 NC noticed a 21% increase in the investigation, prosecution, and sentencing of human trafficking cases, with an emphasis on federal labor trafficking cases in 2022. The focus on labor trafficking prosecution contrasted to the emphasis in prior years. In 2022, 28 survivors in A21’s Legal Assistance Program were being assisted as victim-witnesses in criminal prosecution. A21 provides assistance in these criminal prosecutions through emotional support at hearings, as well as tangible assistance such as providing court-appropriate clothing and meals in between court matters. Additionally, A21 assists in the coordination of logistics for court hearing purposes (transportation to and from court, lodging, etc.). This form of support mitigates the number of potential crises and needs that can occur during court proceedings which can significantly distract victims who are key witnesses in the prosecution.

Survivors supported with direct services earlier in the process (ideally, when initially recovered) have a higher likelihood of successful court cooperation. Access to case management and other services can empower victims to be cooperative witnesses and instill the confidence to testify against their trafficker in court. For example, A21 NC assisted eight survivors in 2022 with transportation, emotional support, and physical support surrounding two federal grand jury cases. All of these survivors were either battling drug addiction or newly sober. While opioid addiction would normally decrease the likelihood of a survivor testifying in a court proceeding, all eight survivors complied with their subpoenas and testified successfully. Additionally, A21 provided similar support to two other survivors required to testify twice in their trafficker’s federal trial. Both survivors were foreign nationals pending legal status, had families, and other issues which caused challenges in timely appearances at trial. However, with the support of A21 NC, both survivors successfully presented trial testimony on both occasions, leading to a guilty verdict.

CIVIL LEGAL CASES

A21 outworks its civil legal assistance cases by coordinating with pro bono legal services or hiring attorneys as needed. In addition to coordinating legal services, A21 provides transportation, gathers supporting documents to support the civil case, assists in application submissions, and continues its direct services through its Aftercare Program. In 2022, A21 assisted 26 survivors with their civil legal cases; 14 of these survivors were already receiving support with a criminal prosecution in which they were a victim-witness. Civil cases included immigration application, criminal record expungement of charges incurred while trafficked, and family court/custody issues. Assisting foreign national survivors obtain legal status reduces their vulnerability to revictimization. For example, if a foreign national victim of labor trafficking does not obtain a Continued Presence VISA, a necessary precursor for a work permit, that victim in desperation may accept illegal employment which may be exploitative.

Criminal expungement cases are critical to ensure that survivors are not discriminated against in their search for appropriate housing or employment. Appropriate employment and housing provides stability to a survivor’s life post-trafficking, decreasing the likelihood of revictimization. Additionally, civil cases such as family court cases are extremely crucial in a survivor’s recovery process. Oftentimes, victims may lose custody of their children due to events surrounding their trafficking situation. In such cases, traffickers can leverage the children to control the victim. Therefore, coordinating legal services to survivors for family court matters can be life-changing.
In 2022, A21 NC supported two female survivors of labor trafficking serving as critical witnesses in a monumental federal domestic servitude and human smuggling prosecution. A recruiter acquainted with these women in their home country in Central America, specifically targeted these women after becoming aware of their financial situation and need for employment. After convincing them of their guaranteed employment in the United States, and settling on the recruitment and travel fees, the recruiter arranged to smuggle the victims across the border and to North Carolina where they thought a job opportunity awaited them. Upon their arrival however, the women’s identifications were confiscated and they were forced into domestic servitude. The victims were recovered after one victim found a cell phone and called the police while she wasn’t being monitored.

Upon A21 NC’s introduction to the survivors, they were in need of social, financial, immigration, and mental health support. Both women entered A21’s Aftercare Program during the pendency of the prosecution, where they received assistance with housing, healthcare, referrals to immigration attorneys, financial assistance, and basic care. A21 bilingual caseworkers worked closely with the survivors to facilitate their testimony for the prosecution, including transporting and accompanying them to court, providing comfortable court-appropriate attire for their testimony, meals during the trial, and emotional support. Ultimately, all four perpetrators involved (recruiter, traffickers, and homeowner who facilitated the domestic servitude) were found guilty of various crimes and sentenced accordingly. While not all the perpetrators were found guilty of a trafficking offense per se, the court heard testimony surrounding the details of the trafficking for purposes of consideration in sentencing. This trial notably highlights the increased interest in prosecuting labor trafficking cases in the United States despite the implicit evidentiary difficulties in such cases.

ENDNOTES

2 Various provisions within U.S. immigration laws provide immigration relief upon fulfillment of certain criteria which can implicate trafficking victims and unaccompanied minors.
SPECIAL REPORT
UKRAINE
The invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation (‘Russia’), ongoing since February 2022, instigated catastrophic new realities for millions of Ukrainians and continues to be a life-threatening and life-altering incursion with no end in sight. Data collected by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that over 7.8 million refugees from Ukraine have been recorded in Europe in 2022. Furthermore, according to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Ukraine was estimated to be over 8 million at its peak. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), explosive weapons caused most of the 17,994 recorded civilian casualties in 2022. However, actual numbers are believed to be much greater. It is impossible to quantify the destruction caused by the incursion, which extends well beyond the 127 billion dollars worth of damage to homes, businesses, schools, roads and other infrastructure.

Refugees are inherently vulnerable to human trafficking as they may lack legal status, employment, support network, essential resources, access to health services and face language barriers. Although IDPs remain in their home nation, they face similar vulnerabilities to human trafficking due to their precarious situation. Human traffickers prey on vulnerability, and irregular forms of migration, including forced migration, typically increase an individual’s risk of exploitation. Ukrainians forced to flee their homes for safety or in search of employment, work and accommodation, whether across the border or internally, were exposed to new threats and challenges.
HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN UKRAINE

Pre-February 2022 Invasion
A21 has been operational in Ukraine since 2009, where it countered human trafficking through prevention and awareness, intervention and survivor aftercare. Before the war, Ukrainian victims were trafficked internally within Ukraine and abroad for both labour and sexual exploitation. Sectors affected by labour trafficking, both domestically and abroad, are agriculture, construction and manufacturing, with reports of forced criminality and begging. Human traffickers operating within Ukraine exploited both citizens and foreign nationals. In recent years, Ukraine has also become a destination country, with trafficking survivors from other Eastern European nations, the Middle East, and Central and Southeast Asia receiving assistance from A21 Ukraine (A21).

From 2009 until 2021, most human trafficking survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program were middle-aged Ukrainians exploited via labour trafficking. Labour trafficking accounted for 73% of A21’s aftercare cases, with sexual exploitation comprising 13%. Traffickers had recruited most victims through fraudulent employment opportunities (79%) through social media, friends and relatives or recruitment agencies. Abductions were the second most reported method (10%).

A21 OPERATIONS RELOCATE TO POLAND

In early 2022, amidst an impending invasion by Russia, A21 contacted survivors in its Aftercare Program with information about the potential threat and provided information on preparing for evacuation. Upon the outbreak of the full-scale invasion in 2022, A21 staff immediately contacted current and past survivors to assess their safety and provide assistance.

In response to Russia’s aggressive bombing of Kyiv and regions throughout Ukraine, A21 relocated its office from Kyiv to Warsaw, Poland, to ensure continued uninterrupted operations and staff safety. As Ukraine continued to respond to ongoing emergencies and dedicated itself to defending itself from Russia, with no perceivable end in sight, the temporary relocation of A21 to Poland soon became permanent for the remainder of the year.

The Impact of Prior Military Conflict in Eastern Ukraine on Human Trafficking
A21 had previously assisted survivors of human trafficking whose exploitation related to the military conflict that started in 2014 in East Ukraine. Some of these cases involved forced labour through abduction, or being taken by pro-Russian forces and controlled by physical abuse, with many accused of being Ukrainian spies. Through prisoner swaps, escape, and being left by the traffickers, these survivors exited trafficking from 2015 until as late as 2020. Other cases involved perpetrators exploiting the military conflict to traffic vulnerable individuals, including by forced labour and domestic servitude. Still, other cases involved Ukrainians desperate to escape the military conflict zone being deceived into trafficking by fraudulent employment opportunities. Exploitation took place as early as 2014 up until 2020, with exploitation spanning from a few weeks to a few years. Although trafficking due to the military conflict occurred as early as 2014, the first of these trafficking survivors only entered A21’s Aftercare Program a year and a half after the commencement of the conflict.

As Poland swiftly became the neighbouring country receiving the most Ukrainian refugees, A21’s operations proved critical to counter-trafficking efforts there. Understanding the vulnerability of refugees and migrants to human trafficking, A21 quickly adapted its operations to prioritise its prevention efforts by forming strategic partnerships to raise awareness about human trafficking among the millions of displaced and vulnerable populations in Poland. In addition to its prevention and awareness efforts, A21 also trained entities supporting Ukrainian refugees to detect and adequately respond to suspected reports of human trafficking. Finally, throughout 2022, A21 prioritised the safety and well-being of survivors in relocating to safer areas, offering emotional and psychological support, and providing practical resources such as gas stoves, medical supplies and food.
The Potential Scale of Trafficking

According to IOM’s estimations, ‘46,000 Ukrainians suffered from human trafficking during 2019 and 2021’, domestically and outside Ukraine (17,000 and 29,000, respectively).\(^1\) Based on the historical correlation between the increase in Ukrainian asylum applications following the 2014 conflict in East Ukraine and the later number of Ukrainian trafficking victims in Western and Central Europe, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates over 100,000 potential Ukrainian trafficking victims in Europe following the increased migration to Europe as a result of the 2022 invasion.\(^1\)

While this projection will likely be affected by variables such as the temporary protection offered by the EU, as noted by the UNODC, it does indicate the potential scale of trafficking.

The threat of exploitation for children unlawfully transferred to Russia, which the US State Department report ‘are highly vulnerable to trafficking’,\(^4\) also exists. Furthermore, reports remain of children used in conflict by Russian-led forces.\(^5\)

According to Yuriy Parkhomenko, Head of the Department of Migration Police of the National Police of Ukraine, those forcibly deported to Russia and Belarus are also at risk of exploitation as they find themselves without work, money, or housing.\(^4\)

During frontline professional training sessions and counter-trafficking meetings throughout 2022, A21 received reports of Ukrainian refugees working unofficial jobs without pay, often living where they worked, and being mistreated. However, these potential victims were reportedly reluctant to report, fearful that this would worsen their situation and cause distrust among future employers. Based on the information provided to A21 by Ukrainian refugees and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) working with the refugee population, A21 also suspects self-identification by victims may be low due to a lack of trust in the authorities, feelings of insecurity in a foreign country, language barriers and a lack of understanding of and access to their rights.

The National Police of Ukraine’s 2022 Figures on Human Trafficking

The National Police of Ukraine (NPU) reported 134 criminal trafficking offences for 2022, comprised of the following: labour exploitation (44), sexual exploitation (42), involvement in criminal activity (23), child trafficking (12), surrogate motherhood (12) and forced begging (1). The NPU reported the identification of 131 victims of human trafficking, with women comprising 54.9%.

The majority of incidents were recorded from the capital city Kyiv (43), followed by Odesa (19), Dnipropetrovsk (15), the Kyiv region (13), and the Lviv (10) region. The NPU also reported stopping certain illegal activity by five organised groups related to human trafficking in 2022.\(^7\)

Official reports of human trafficking do not necessarily indicate the full extent of this crime during the war; instead, it may take years before instances of exploitation in 2022 are revealed, as seen in A21 cases from the earlier 2014 aggression by Russia in East Ukraine.

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*Today we face new challenges - a humanitarian crisis, the movement of millions of Ukrainians abroad in search of a calmer, safer place, as well as such a problem as the forced relocation and deportation of Ukrainians, in particular children, to the Russian Federation, Belarus, and temporarily occupied territories.*

- Kateryna Pavlichenko, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs\(^8\)
PARTNERSHIPS FOR PREVENTION
AND AWARENESS

As part of its prevention and awareness efforts, A21 focuses on human trafficking education and reducing vulnerability in at-risk populations. In 2022, A21 pivoted its prevention and awareness work to respond to the conflict and quickly create additional resources aimed at newly emerging trends and demographics.

Proactive Measures
A21 regularly attended six different UNHCR-led working groups in Poland throughout 2022, connecting to new partners and receiving invitations to provide professional training and distribute prevention and awareness resources. Despite outworking its operations in Poland, A21 also maintained a strong relationship with law enforcement and governmental ministries in Ukraine, such as the Ukrainian Migration Police and the Ministry of Social Policy. In collaboration with various partners in Poland and Ukraine, A21 distributed 30,147 hotline leaflets, safe employment cards and flyers, 9,000 map brochures and 4,220 refugee comic books. Through radio, podcasts, social media and awareness billboards, A21 also had the opportunity to reach potentially millions of people. A21 created prevention and awareness resources to address potential human trafficking and exploitation issues arising from the mass migration caused by the conflict, outlining indicators of trafficking and safety tips for those travelling internationally, such as retaining control of personal identification and screening offers for transportation or shelter. Towards the end of 2022, A21 also launched a Safe Employment Campaign to offer guidance on avoiding fraudulent employment opportunities.

Strategic Partnerships
In partnership with the Lviv Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, the State Border Service of Ukraine and the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, A21 produced 12,000 safety and human trafficking prevention flyers for distribution in Ukraine at the border and in refugee centres. These flyers contained essential information about Ukrainian refugees and general information about human trafficking. Specifically, these flyers listed emergency phone numbers; a QR code to access hotline and emergency numbers from across Europe; a QR code to access a chatbot managed by Lviv State University of Internal Affairs and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe; and critical contacts specifically for Ukrainian refugees in different countries available on the Telegram App (used by most Ukrainians).

Throughout 2022, the Ukrainian Ministry of Social Policy and the Ukrainian Migration Police distributed 9,000 A21 map pamphlets providing 18 hotline and police phone numbers for different European countries, websites with helpful information for refugees and a map highlighting available services in Europe. On World Day Against Human Trafficking in July 2022, the Ministry and Police distributed 3,700 A21 resources in Kyiv, including these map pamphlets, to raise awareness about human trafficking.

Global advertising agency, Clear Channel, displayed prevention billboards created by A21 highlighting the National Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking phone number in Poland, the EU emergency number, and a QR code to access more information about human trafficking, with a potential reach of over 4.6 million people. These 88 digital billboards were placed in high-traffic areas in the seven largest cities in Poland to share the human trafficking helpline number with refugees in their new neighbourhoods.

In cooperation with Meta via Facebook and Instagram, A21 conducted two online campaigns reaching potentially millions, targeting citizens of Ukraine in the eight countries with the most significant number of Ukrainian refugees. The first campaign launched in April 2022 and spanned six weeks, primarily focusing on informing refugees about their vulnerability and the dangers of human trafficking. The second campaign, launched in October and November 2022, continued to raise awareness and focused on safe employment for refugees abroad and reducing the risk of labour exploitation.

Refugee Comic Book
A21 designed and produced a refugee comic book in Ukrainian, Polish and English depicting scenes a child might witness crossing the border or when internally displaced within Ukraine. A21 strategically created this refugee comic book using visuals to ensure that children and low-literacy adults could easily access this critical message. A21 and partner organisations distributed 4,220 comics across Ukraine and Poland in partnership with the migration police, the UNHCR, an elementary school, NGOs, a Polish labour office and other government-run service facilities.

This child-friendly prevention material depicts two siblings meeting a ‘safe person’ in a yellow vest showing them emergency phone numbers and the signs of human trafficking. Later in the story, when the siblings meet an ‘unsafe person’ who is only wearing a vest to appear as though they are trustworthy, the children know to reject his offer and the number to call for help.
Radio and Podcasts
In 2022, A21’s Ukraine Country Manager, in an interview on a Ukrainian radio station, shared advice about preventing human trafficking with potentially millions of listeners. The interview allowed her to share not only her expertise in countering human trafficking but also her personal experience in exiting Ukraine during the conflict, providing a unique perspective on the situation. She offered recommendations on crossing the border safely, encouraged migrants to keep in touch with their families, travel with a group and always check volunteers’ documents before accepting help. She continued to speak about human trafficking on the American radio station National Public Radio, again reaching potentially millions of listeners. In addition, one of A21’s staff appeared as a guest speaker on two podcasts for Polish professionals, with one addressing potentially hundreds of thousands of listeners about human trafficking within the context of the war.

Safe Employment Campaign
According to pre-war A21 data, human traffickers have historically used fraudulent employment opportunities as the primary recruitment tactic in Ukraine. Notably, data collected from all survivors entering A21’s Aftercare Program globally in 2022 identified fraudulent job opportunities as the primary recruitment method for human trafficking that year. As the war continued well into 2022, and Ukrainian refugees realised the likelihood of remaining in Poland indefinitely, many started actively seeking employment in the latter half of the year. A21, recognising the need to raise awareness about forced labour and fraudulent job recruitment, created and launched its Safe Employment Campaign targeted at Ukrainian refugees in Poland, Latvia and Germany. As part of this campaign, refugee centres played a 35-minute ‘Safe Employment Campaign’ video created by A21 with guidance on safely seeking employment. A21 also created safe employment cards and posters. These campaign posters provided a general caution about seeking work and a QR code linking to the Safe Employment Campaign video. The accompanying cards offered more information about Polish labour laws, minimum wage, safety precautions to prevent exploitation, and the law enforcement-operated human trafficking hotline number. A21 distributed 2,281 of these cards through partners, such as refugee centres, long-term housing for refugees, labour offices, advice centres and NGOs working on the frontlines. The cards were and continue to be well received, with organisations showing interest in continuing to disperse the safeguarding materials.

FRONTLINE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING
Frontline professional training became a priority for A21 in 2022, and newly formed partnerships led to much-needed training opportunities. A21 conducted 13 professional trainings for 213 frontline professionals and volunteers working in refugee centres, local government, such as the social services centre in Kyiv, Canadian and US Army representatives, an NGO and a hotline in Spain, healthcare facilities, the UNHCR, an NGO specialised in assisting irregular migrants and the United Kingdom (UK) Border Force. While A21 conducted in-person training whenever possible, online options also allowed staff to continue training entities in Ukraine, and NGOs and government entities in other countries working with Ukrainian refugees.

A21 provided training focused on the area of expertise of the specified frontline profession using examples from A21’s experience. Trainees primarily requested guidance on recognising and responding to suspected human trafficking and modifying their organisational procedures to include trafficking prevention materials.

‘WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR THE TRAINING... THE TOPIC IS DEFINITELY FOR “HERE AND NOW”, BUT ALSO SO DEMANDING IN TERMS OF INCREASING CIVIC AWARENESS THAT TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IS NOT AN “EXOTIC” TOPIC IN EUROPE AND POLAND...’

— Dorota Piechowicz-Witoń, Head of the Centre for Civic Dialogue, Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, Opole City Hall, Poland
Through its professional training program, A21’s human trafficking specialists educate on general human trafficking indicators and equip trainees to develop contextualised counter-trafficking efforts within their sphere of influence. In 2022, several organisations trained by A21 in Poland modified their policies or procedures to include considerations specific to human trafficking. Management at some refugee centres advised of their plans to introduce several A21 recommended changes, including a new registration process for those entering and exiting the centre, criminal record checks for staff, and an improved screening process for partner organisations providing relocation, accommodation, and employment services for refugees at the centre. These developments extend beyond identifying potential victims, including preventative strategies. Such considerations focus on proactively safeguarding vulnerable refugees from potential perpetrators using volunteer or service provider opportunities as a pretext to ultimately traffic Ukrainian refugees.

SAFEGUARDING UKRAINIANS
IN-TRANSIT

The Ukrainian refugee crisis reached across Europe as millions of refugees fled Ukraine in search of safety. Even while operating in Poland, A21 received requests for assistance from organisations located in other European countries. In 2022, A21 partnered with Open Arms, a humanitarian aid organisation based in Spain. While Open Arms historically focused on assisting irregular migrants abandoned at sea, it also helped in Spain’s reception of Ukrainian refugees. Understanding the vulnerability of refugees generally to human trafficking, Open Arms requested training from A21. A21 Ukraine and A21 Spain worked jointly to remotely train frontline professionals and volunteers from Open Arms and their partner organisation, Integralia DKV, on human trafficking.

Moreover, A21’s staff provided insight into cultural aspects to consider when communicating with Ukrainians, as well as their first-hand perspectives as refugees themselves. A21 also provided more in-depth training to Open Arms in-person in Warsaw, including utilising a victim-centred approach when interacting with potential victims of trafficking and general training in working directly with survivors of trafficking. Through this relationship, A21 supported the safe relocation of approximately 1,500 Ukrainian refugees travelling via six charter flights from Poland to Spain and Canada. In response to a request by Open Arms, A21 staff conducted cursory human trafficking screenings to determine whether any relocating Ukrainian refugees might be en route to a potentially exploitative situation. These screenings also provided opportunities to educate on refugees’ susceptibility to exploitation and to give tips on protective measures.

Through an opportunity provided by the A21 UK office, the A21 Ukraine Country Manager provided a remote presentation on the refugee crisis to UK law enforcement. The UK Border Force invited A21 Ukraine’s Country Manager to train their border force staff at a UK Airport on appropriately and effectively supporting Ukrainian refugees entering the UK. Subsequently, when UK law enforcement encountered three potential Ukrainian victims travelling to the UK, they were able to request that A21 conduct remote screenings.
At the start of the war, many people in Ukraine had only 10-15 minutes alert to these announcements. Upon these calls, one survivor who had slept through the initial alert safely found shelter. A21 also supported the relocation of many survivors to areas known to be relatively safer.

When reliable sources indicated a Russian invasion was imminent, A21 prepared crisis ‘go bags’ for those needing to evacuate. These strategically packed bags contained emergency supplies for immediate evacuation, including a flashlight, batteries, a radio, wet wipes, medical supplies, food and water. A21 also provided survivors in need with gas burners to heat water or cook food, battery-powered light bulbs, power banks and portable lanterns in response to the nationwide energy crisis that caused prolonged power outages, sometimes lasting several days or leaving people without power for 8-10 hours a day.

**Crisis Response**

At the start of the war, many people in Ukraine had only 10-15 minutes to find shelter after the state of emergency announcements. Once alerted to these announcements, A21 staff immediately attempted to contact all survivors in its Aftercare Program to ensure their safety. Due to these calls, one survivor who had slept through the initial alert safely found shelter. A21 also supported the relocation of many survivors to areas known to be relatively safer.

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‘I can’t express to you in words how nice it is to hear my phone ringing, not because it’s an alarm clock, but because someone is interested in me and sincerely cares.’

— Survivor of Human Trafficking

**Survivor Care**

**Aftercare Annual Summary**

In 2022, A21 supported 27 survivors of human trafficking through A21’s Aftercare Program, with all seven new survivors from 2022 entering its Aftercare Program in January before the war. All but one survivor was Ukrainian, consistent with previous years. After connecting with survivors previously in A21’s program, A21 reopened six former cases to offer further assistance. In response to the most requested services, A21 provided psychological support, access to medical supplies, finances for rent and utilities, necessities, including food, and assistance in relocating to safer areas of Ukraine or other countries. Recognising the increased need for ongoing holistic support, A21 offered Life Programs throughout 2022. These programs addressed significant healing and skill development needs that survivors were facing as a result of both their trafficking experience and the war. Programs focused on developing emotional resilience and life skills, including resume writing and seeking employment, safety, cooking without electricity, personal boundaries and budgeting.

**Psychological and Emotional Support**

In 2022, A21 caseworkers prioritised establishing and maintaining regular remote communication with survivors of human trafficking in its Aftercare Program. Fleeing life-threatening conflict triggered and exacerbated many survivors’ preexisting trauma from their trafficking. The experience of chronic stress and compounding trauma required caseworkers to respond by providing basic needs assistance and psychological and emotional support. Caseworkers contacted survivors who had previously exited the program, with cases from as far back as 2012, to ensure their well-being and meet potential needs.

After conducting assessments of survivors in its Aftercare Program, A21 sent 162 care packs containing food and toiletries to survivors across Ukraine. A21 also provided care packs for potential victims of human trafficking, either receiving support from a partner organisation in Ukraine or referred to A21 by other NGOs. All survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program received special food packages before Christmas.

When physically located in Kyiv, A21 historically offered support to survivors in various locations throughout Ukraine, mainly through remote support, with occasional in-person visits. During the COVID-19 pandemic, A21 continued its Aftercare Program remotely in compliance with strict restrictions. Consequently, both A21 and survivors in its Aftercare Program quickly adapted to continued remote services after relocating to Poland in 2022. Some female survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program fled Ukraine for other Western European countries. A21 continued to provide remote support to these survivors as they settled into their new host nations. The male survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program remained in Ukraine due to restrictions on men leaving the country. When possible, caseworkers conducted in-person meetings with survivors in Ukraine. However, A21 staff faced challenges reaching survivors in regions close to armed conflict or cities affected by transportation disruptions. Moreover, despite being skilled in providing remote care, the energy crisis and lack of cell service and internet caused by damaged infrastructure and the gas supply shut-off sometimes made communication impossible.

A21’s staff were also working in the uniquely challenging context of being refugees, with several female staff members caring for their
children while separated from their husbands due to restrictions on leaving Ukraine. Despite these unprecedented emotional and psychological challenges, A21 staff strived to continue to offer the same quality of care and support previously provided to survivors. A21 staff members were acutely aware of the devastation of Russia’s invasion on each Ukrainian citizen and even more aware of the additional difficulties the war brought to survivors in their Aftercare Program due to preexisting trauma from trafficking. This awareness and understanding led the A21 staff to work with even more determination to ensure survivors in its Aftercare Program received proper care and support during this period.

**Meeting Essential Needs**

Beyond funding psychological consultations and emotional support, A21 provided many survivors with basic needs. A21 assisted ten survivors in Ukraine with emergency accommodation or financial assistance to pay for housing. A21 also purchased and delivered medicine and medical supplies to survivors. For those abroad, in occupied territories, or with immediate medical needs, A21 transferred funds to pay for medication. In one instance, A21 financially supported a survivor recovering from surgery.

**Finding Employment**

The continued war with Russia depleted resources and further exacerbated unemployment. Even before the war, finding stable employment proved challenging in Ukraine. However, many Ukrainians lost their jobs as businesses shut down after Russia’s invasion. Survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program living in Ukraine also struggled with obtaining stable employment during this period. Young adult survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program reported steady employment as their greatest need. Those able to work in 2022 typically only had temporary jobs. Some faced repeated unemployment in Ukraine and abroad, forcing them to continually search for work and accept one-off or temporary part-time jobs. A21 offered emotional support to survivors facing the continual disappointment of losing a job and encouraged them to prepare for their following interview. A21 caseworkers reviewed the Life Skills program with survivors to address resume writing and employment searches. As a result, despite the challenges caused by the war, eight survivors overcame obstacles and independently found work in 2022.

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**KATERYNA’S STORY**

Ukrainians lived under the threat of an invasion for some time before the 24th of February. After hearing about the war, Kateryna packed her bags with two weeks of supplies for herself and her children. However, she did not prepare to relocate permanently, thinking they would be able to return home shortly.

As she and her children drove to Poland, her mind raced with questions: Where will we stay? How will I keep my kids safe in a new place? When will I see my husband again? She started looking for work but faced jobs offering minimal pay or general employment advertisements providing little information. Although uneasy about these prospects, Kateryna, desperate, began to consider applying for one of the jobs. Then, she started seeing A21 leaflets and posters with information in Ukrainian about the signs of human trafficking. Kateryna had never considered this or even thought herself vulnerable to trafficking. She was thankful she now had an idea of the signs to look for, to recognise a dangerous situation and avoid a false job opportunity.

Today, Kateryna continues to live in Poland with her children. She is hopeful for peace in her country and that she will soon be able to return home and be reunited with her husband.

*Name is changed for their protection.*
ENDNOTES

4 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 United States, Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. 2022 Trafficking in Persons Report, 2022.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
19 See Appendix B for more information on A21’s Professional Training Program.
20 "My jesteśmy bardzo wdzięczni za to spotkanie... temat jak najbardziej na "tu i teraz" ale też bardzo wymagający pod kątem podnoszenia świadomości obywatelskiej, że handel ludźmi to nie jest w Europie i Polsce temat "egzotyczny"...", Original quote translated by A21.
21 Original quote translated by A21.
A21’s ‘Reach’ operational strategy recognises that the most effective way to prevent human trafficking and exploitation is through prevention, awareness, and education strategies outworked with at-risk populations, vulnerable communities, as well as within the broader general population. A21’s Reach strategy exists to disrupt the cycle of exploitation by reducing risk factors and providing safeguarding information, training, and awareness tools. Furthermore, it aims to provide resources with accessible and tangible reporting methods as a practical tool to encourage the general population to report suspected human trafficking.

The ‘Reach’ operational strategy includes all of A21’s prevention programs, awareness campaigns, and education curriculum, as well as professional development training for educators, with the aim of safeguarding those who are vulnerable to human trafficking. There is no single profile for trafficked individuals; adults and minors in rural, suburban, and urban communities across the world experience and are vulnerable to human trafficking. Those victimised by human trafficking have diverse socio-economic backgrounds, varied levels of education, and may be documented or undocumented. While human trafficking spans all demographics, there are risk factors that lead to a higher susceptibility to victimisation, including job and family instability, violence and abuse, lower education, substance misuse, poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and isolation. These factors can weaken defensive measures and make individuals more vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation.

PREVENTION

A21’s prevention resources are designed specifically to reach vulnerable populations, including asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons, migrants, children in foster care, homelessness, and those in group homes and orphanages. These resources include the Early Childhood Prevention Program (ECPP), comic books, video games, a children’s storybook, Parent Guides (for children and teens), Safe Employment Guides, Student Digital Safety Guides, and presentations. Often A21’s prevention programs are physically conducted in-person with the most vulnerable, poor, ostracised, stigmatised, socially removed populations in communities. Within every resource, presentation and community visit, A21 staff ensures hotline numbers are shared, practical assistance is provided, and intervention and assistance is available through referral to local authorities.

A21’s Early Childhood Prevention Program (ECPP) is a child-centered, activity-based program designed to empower vulnerable children ages 3-6 and equip them with safety tools for protection as they navigate potentially dangerous situations in their young lives. One of the core aims of this program is to prevent young children from becoming victims of human trafficking. Included in this program is a supporting Steps to Staying Safe Storybook that can be used to reinforce the learning experience of the children being taught. The storybook is designed to help children learn more about human trafficking prevention utilizing visual storytelling, through the story of Maria.

PRIMARY PREVENTION PROGRAM

A21’s Primary Prevention Program (PPP) is comprised of three child-centred, play-based sessions designed to empower children and champion their young voices to make informed decisions to protect themselves and others from trafficking scenarios. The program is researched-based and includes three core sessions: Values and Child Rights, Safe and Unsafe Migration, and Human Trafficking and Exploitation. These sessions are designed for children ages 6-12 and are currently available on A21’s website in seven different languages. Each country-specific version of the program has been contextualised to be relevant for the local region and to incorporate local laws.

As part of the PPP and as a standalone resource, A21 launched the "Staying Safe Online Comic Book," which is designed to help young children learn more about digital safety and to equip them with tools to prevent them from becoming potential victims of online exploitation.

END VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN (EVAC) COMPUTER GAME

The The End Violence Against Children (EVAC) game is a project funded from a UNICEF grant, developed by A21 in partnership with Kent University (Centre for Child Protection), ECPAT International and PlayerThree Games. The EVAC games ‘May and Bay’ are online preventative education digital games designed to be used by professionals with children and young people (C&YP) across Thailand and Cambodia. May and Bay are two interactive games for children aged 8-14 to learn strategies on how to protect themselves online and in the wider community.
SAFETY GUIDES AND E-COURSES
A21 produced a digital ‘Safe Employment Guide’ to educate the general public on recognising and preventing labour trafficking, utilising reporting information, safety tips, and red flags. These guides highlight indicators of safe and unsafe job opportunities and give the reader practical tools and resources to assess potential employment. A21 also created ‘Parent Guides’ for caretakers of both younger children (6-12) and teenagers (13-17) with key information to help prevent online child exploitation and human trafficking. They are designed to help parents of children and teenagers start conversations about human trafficking generally. In addition, A21’s Safe Relationship Guides are intended for teens and young adults with a focus on safe and unsafe communication, personal safety boundaries, and relationship safeguards. A21’s Student Digital Safety Guide is written for young people and uses a pretend online grooming text thread as an example. This guide introduces online sexual exploitation, highlights the red flags of online conversations with strangers, and provides safety tips to avoid, identify and report suspicious behavior. All versions have been translated into seven or more languages and are available online. A21 e-courses are easy to use, self-paced learning tools that equip, educate, and train users to respond to the issue of human trafficking through action and awareness. They provide information about human trafficking, relevant safety tips, conversation starters, and hotline numbers. In 2022, our team launched several new e-courses on the following topics: safe relationships, safe employment, parent guides for kids and teens, and facilitator training for several A21 prevention programs.

AWARENESS
A21’s awareness resources, campaigns, and presentations provide information to various audiences and give practical action steps that can be taken to counter human trafficking. Target audiences include: children and young people, university students, adult populations in communities, government agencies or task forces, and faith-based groups or organisations/businesses. All of A21’s awareness resources and presentations are translated into local languages and contextualised by A21’s country offices, to include local laws, customs, trends, and observations.

WALK FOR FREEDOM
A21’s Walk For Freedom (WFF) is an annual campaign and day of global awareness and local action in the fight against human trafficking where individuals engage their community through local walk events and challenges to raise awareness about human trafficking in their cities and collectively result in a ripple effect around the world. In 2022, WFF saw walks in 50+ countries, with an estimated reach of 824 million people. One of the participants in the Copenhagen, Denmark WFF said, “I was not sure what impact a walk could have, what difference would it have on slavery that we walk? But when I heard the story of how the signs to look for had led to a police report and heard about examples of trafficking, I understood why we do this and what difference it actually makes.”

THE ‘CAN YOU SEE ME?’ CAMPAIGN
The ‘Can You See Me?’ (CYSM) campaign is a global anti-human trafficking public awareness and identification campaign of A21. The concept behind CYSM focuses on the ‘hidden but in plain sight’ reality that underlies human trafficking. This campaign seeks to educate the public with the subtle indicators of human trafficking in order to expose a seemingly innocuous situation with the reality that human trafficking is occurring. In 2022, A21’s CYSM campaign videos, billboards, posters and additional resources had an estimated reach of more than 1.1 billion people worldwide (and 3.2 billion people since 2019). As the campaign is country-specific, CYSM requires collaboration with governments and local NGOs to ascertain the specific type of exploitation that is most prevalent in that particular country. As the campaign seeks to train the viewer on recognising and reporting potential trafficking in that country, CYSM has a call to action, and provides the relevant hotline in that country.

Best Practices from A21’s Can You See Me? Public Awareness Campaign are as follows:

- Dual purpose – (1) as a tool for identification of the victimised; and (2) general awareness & education tool
- Broad target audience – (1) exploited individuals; (2) general public; and (3) industry employees
- Specific to the local issues – (1) tailored to the prevalent human trafficking issues in the country/locality; and (2) industry specific
- Time sensitive - as most public service announcements only have 30 or 60 seconds to relay a message, within that allotted time, the videos seek to include:
  - The current seemingly ‘normal’ situation where an individual is being exploited
  - The backstory that led up to that situation
  - A call to action on part of the viewer
  - A united front from all the partners of the campaign (NGOs, hotlines, governments, industry, etc.)

CYSM materials are provided free of charge in multiple formats.

EDUCATION
The K-12 Human Trafficking Education Curriculum equips educators in the United States with age-appropriate, standard-based, interactive lessons designed to empower students with protective tools to guard against exploitation and human trafficking. These developmentally appropriate lessons are structured around four spiraled pillars: Rights and Responsibilities, Character Development, Relationship Boundaries, and Digital Safety to support creating a comprehensive approach to keeping students safe. In 2022, A21 piloted this curriculum in three states: Florida, Michigan, and Texas. The impact was more than 1,300 educators being trained to teach a potential 300,000+ students in the 2022-2023 school year.
A21’s Educator Safety Guide equips educational stakeholders with information to identify potential human trafficking victims in the classroom. The formalised school system provides an infrastructure that allows students to learn important information to protect themselves while also empowering them to advocate and respond. Application of the guides ensure that the classroom becomes a place filled with safe adults who can identify at-risk youth and provide them with assistance and support. Currently, A21 offers 13 versions of this guide in eight languages online as well as an e-course in English.
A21’s ‘Rescue’ operational strategy incorporates all of A21’s intervention and legal assistance efforts. A21 outworks intervention efforts by focusing on victim identification through professional training, proactive identification operations, national human trafficking hotlines and Child Advocacy Centres (CAC). In addition, A21 recognises the vital importance of access to justice for survivors’ restoration and recovery. To that end, A21 provides survivors engaged with the Legal Assistance Program either with an attorney, assistance accessing legal services, or both.

A primary component of intervention is victim identification and self-identification. Individuals may or may not realise that they are being trafficked or exploited or may not want their victimisation recognised for several reasons, including psychological factors. Self-recognition, however, is essential to realise certain rights available only to recognised ‘victims’ under the law, and a lack of self-recognition often enables the continuity of exploitation.

Formal classification as a human trafficking victim under the relevant country’s law generally confers specific treatment and assistance. While benefits vary by country, they can include legal immigration status, financial restitution, housing assistance and protection from criminal prosecution for acts committed while trafficked.

Identification of exploited individuals involves both education and a mechanism to facilitate proper identification and education. The controlling nature of traffickers and the high risk involved in being positioned to be identified makes victim identification a challenging intervention effort. Significant barriers to identification can stem from an unwillingness or fear of engaging with law enforcement or a lack of self-recognition of victimisation.

A21 overcomes these barriers by providing screening and translation services at targeted victim identification operations and through the A21 nationally-operated human trafficking hotlines. In addition, A21 facilitates the effective identification of minor victims through CACs and child forensic interviewing.

Identification also requires proactive efforts before encountering potential victims of trafficking, namely providing specialised training to frontline professionals likely to intersect with potential victims of trafficking due to the nature of their employment, such as law enforcement, healthcare professionals and transportation sector employees. Training material might include identifying human trafficking and using a victim-centred approach when interacting with potential victims. A21 also provides training for legal professionals likely to interact with victims of trafficking, such as prosecutors and judges, focusing on taking a victim-centred approach throughout criminal trials.

A21’s Professional Training Program recognises that certain frontline professionals are more likely to encounter a potential victim of human trafficking due to the intersection between human trafficking and their profession. These professionals may be required legislatively to detect potential victims of human trafficking proactively or may be required to do so under the terms of their employment. Others may have no explicit duty to uncover potential victims but might be in the best position to do so due to the nature of their work.

Frontline professionals include border and immigration officials, those in the transportation industry and hospitality sector, healthcare professionals, law enforcement and legal professionals. As many of these individuals are first responders, they are in the best position to first engage with potential victims. Moreover, many frontline professionals work in locations where traffickers will have a heightened sense of possible apprehensions, such as the initial entry into another country or at a medical appointment due to an injury caused by the trafficker.

A21 trains these frontline professionals on the fundamental principles underlying human trafficking, recognising human trafficking in their country, utilising a survivor-centred approach and any nuances specific to the targeted industry. Training is provided in person or online, and the A21 Counter-Trafficking Toolkit, a comprehensive ‘train the trainer’ resource, is available for further in-house development.

Comprehensive identification of victims encompasses developing an effective response and a proactive approach. While self-identified victims may contact A21 for services, due to the unlikeliness of self-identification, efforts to encounter victims are an essential aspect of identification. Therefore, A21 engages in proactive
identification efforts with other frontline professionals, such as law enforcement, immigration officials, airport authorities and other NGOs.

By working collaboratively, A21 has provided various frontline professionals, such as law enforcement, the opportunity to use a victim-centric approach when engaging with potential victims of human trafficking. Furthermore, while some exploited individuals are reluctant to speak to law enforcement, they may be more likely to engage with NGOs. During these interactions, A21 provides victims with immediate assistance via language interpretation, emergency housing and other support services.

HOTLINES

A21 operates national human trafficking hotlines in Greece, South Africa and Bulgaria and is the only reporting mechanism available 24/7 in each respective country to receive and manage reports of human trafficking solely. These Hotlines provide a national focal point for reporting trafficking-related concerns. They are designated to receive reports of suspected human trafficking, both over the phone and online, and to provide resources for trafficking survivors needing assistance. Hotlines are, therefore, a vital tool in providing effective service delivery to survivors and the general public with trafficking-related issues, serving as a central point for the receipt, management and referral of reports.

These Hotlines operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, offering interpretation services in numerous languages. In addition to accepting phone calls, all three A21-operated Hotlines receive reports and requests for assistance through online communication, including web-based reports. After receiving a report of suspected trafficking, call specialists respond by submitting requests for follow-up to law enforcement, other government agencies, or other service providers. Often, A21-operated Hotlines conduct extensive follow-ups before submitting a referral. Call specialists combine subject matter and technical expertise with knowledge of the specifics of local services and referral pathways, ensuring that the Hotlines respond to every report appropriately.

Hotlines also foster cross-sector working and cooperation, bringing together different entities, including government, law enforcement and NGOs, to facilitate a holistic approach to countering human trafficking and other inter-related crimes.

In this way, Hotlines rely on strong partnerships and collaboration with key stakeholders and partner organisations to quickly and effectively refer cases to the appropriate authorities when needed.

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRES

Child Advocacy Centres (CAC) (or Children’s Advocacy Centres) and the ideas and methodologies embodied at CACs arose in the mid-1980s in the United States as the need to coordinate responses in child abuse cases quickly became apparent. CACs have become the standard for best practices in the United States and worldwide in responding to a child’s disclosure of abuse, including human trafficking and other exploitation.

CACs often serve a dual function by invoking the investigatory response to child exploitation through child forensic interviews and multidisciplinary team (MDT) meetings and to house aftercare services specific to children. Child forensic interviews are a concept introduced in the last quarter of the 20th century in response to research reflecting the best way to elicit accurate information from children about traumatic abuse they have experienced. An MDT within the context of a CAC gathers a ‘group of professionals from specific, distinct disciplines that collaborate from the point of report [of abuse] and throughout a child and family’s involvement with the CAC’ to reduce trauma and coordinate services that will best serve the child. Before the creation of the CAC and the MDT, abused children would be interviewed on multiple occasions by various professionals individually, such as law enforcement for purposes of criminal investigation, medical personnel for medical purposes, child protective services for social services reasons, etc., resulting in multiple interviews of the same child invariably about the same issue. Moreover, before the creation of the CAC and MDT, professionals did not share information, resulting in duplicating efforts, miscommunication and constant re-traumatisation of child survivors.

CACs revolutionised the response of professionals to child abuse through the use of recorded child forensic interviews and creating an MDT approach to an allegation of child exploitation. A21 has the option to administer its relevant aftercare programs for child survivors in its CACs and strategically open CACs in locations with a demonstrable need for child-specific services. While the resources to support a CAC differ by country and region, A21 attempts to exemplify the model CAC with the best available resources and under the applicable laws within that country.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

A21’s Legal Assistance Program provides ‘Legal Representation’ or ‘Legal Support’ for survivors of human trafficking in its Aftercare Program. Healing is multi-faceted, and supporting survivors in obtaining justice against traffickers is critical to recovery. In addition to providing a sense of justice for survivors, the arrest and subsequent successful prosecution of traffickers can reassure survivors against the fear of retrafficking or retaliation by the perpetrators.

APPENDIX B
LEGAL REPRESENTATION
Several survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program have corresponding
criminal prosecutions where they are the named victim-witnesses
in prosecutions against their traffickers. In these cases, the survivors’
preliminary statements comprise a significant basis for the initial
arrest of the trafficker, and their later in-court testimony is often
crucial to the success of the prosecution. The complexities of human
trafficking generally, as often reflected in the dynamics between the
traffickers and their victims, the lack of understanding about the
practical outworking of human trafficking in the legal system, as well
as the necessary burden of proof in such prosecutions, often result
in traffickers either not being prosecuted, or in failed prosecutions.

To address this gap and obtain justice for survivors in A21’s
Aftercare Program, A21 may provide survivors with legal represen-
tation as a ‘victim’s attorney’ to represent the survivor’s interests
during the criminal prosecution. In these cases, A21’s attorney works
directly with the survivor, with the support of A21 staff, to ensure
that survivors are prepared in all aspects to provide the court with
their testimonies. A21 also occasionally contracts attorneys for civil
legal representation to assist in civil matters such as family law or
immigration. Finally, under this program, when warranted, A21
hires defence attorneys to represent survivors being prosecuted for
crimes committed while trafficked.

LEGAL SUPPORT
Services provided by A21 under ‘Legal Support’ include coordinating
legal services with a pro bono lawyer either in the criminal proceed-
ing as a victim’s attorney or, more often, in civil proceedings, and
continued support throughout the legal proceedings. In this type
of support, A21 staff assists the survivor and pro bono attorney as
needed to support the survivor’s legal position in court. Assistance
can range from submitting an affidavit in support of an immigration
application to accompanying survivors to civil court hearings to
demonstrate the existence of a survivor’s support network.

Legal Support services also include cases where A21 advocates
for the survivor in a criminal prosecution against the trafficker. In
these cases, A21 staff ensures that the survivor is sufficiently re-
sourced and supported both materially and psychologically to walk
through the court process, including but not limited to providing
basic needs, transportation to the courthouse, court-appropriate
attire and in-court support. In addition, where possible, A21 pro-
vides survivors with the necessary professional therapy services
as support throughout the prosecution, including preparing for
their in-court testimony and post-court debriefing.

In addition, if survivors in A21’s Aftercare Program face crim-
inal liability for acts coerced by the trafficker or are considered
a witness rather than a victim under the law, A21 can work di-
rectly with the survivor and law enforcement to clarify facts and
provide evidentiary proof so that the survivor can be treated as a
named-victim under the law. Finally, on occasion, in response to an
official inquiry from the court, A21 has testified in a quasi-expert
capacity on human trafficking generally.

² Newlin, et. al., Child Forensic Interviewing: Best Practices, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency
Prevention, at 2 [September 2015].
³ National Children’s Alliance, Standard for Accredited Members, at 12, 2017 Ed.
A21 Restore offers a trauma-informed, survivor-centred aftercare program to survivors of human trafficking in Bulgaria, Cambodia, Greece, South Africa, Thailand, Ukraine, and the United States. A21’s Aftercare program focuses on outwarding its strategy in the survivor’s community, and engaging local services as the primary avenue of support for survivor’s successful reintegration into the community. The ‘Restore’ operational strategy embodies all of A21’s aftercare programs which aim to assist survivors in achieving restoration, reintegration into their community, and independence by providing comprehensive individualised services, including case management, medical, dental and psychological treatment, accommodation, domestic and international relocation and repatriation, education and employment support, and financial assistance. A21 defines restoration as a survivor exhibiting low vulnerability to the risk of revictimisation.

Through the provision of holistic aftercare services, survivors within A21’s Aftercare program are empowered to live independently, having addressed over time and with assistance, the factors that made them vulnerable to trafficking, thus reducing the likelihood of revictimisation. A21’s global Restore caseworker teams are staffed by qualified social workers, psychologists, and other allied health professionals, who offer case management and support survivors in their journey to restoration and independence. Psychological assessment and therapy is provided to survivors primarily through external psychologists and psychiatrists within the public and private health sector to those who wish to engage in mental health services. Various iterations of the following A21 Aftercare programs are outworked in each active ‘Restore’ country.

Survivors are referred to A21’s Aftercare program through A21’s Hotlines and Child Advocacy Centres, local law enforcement and partner organisations. Upon referral, an A21 caseworker conducts a screening interview with the potential victim of trafficking to determine whether the individual has been victimised. Following admittance into the program, survivors receive services according to their needed level of care in A21’s Tiered Aftercare Support model.

COMMUNITY MODEL AND FREEDOM CENTRES

A21 bases its Aftercare program on a community model of service provision that assists survivors to reintegrate safely and independently back into their community utilising local services centralised through A21’s Freedom Centres, a drop-in day centre, which serve as the primary avenue for survivors to receive direct case management support. Freedom Centres offer survivors a safe place to meet with their caseworker, build community with other survivors, and access A21 aftercare services, which may include but are not limited to, Life Programs, job readiness and vocational training, language lessons, tutoring, cooking classes, creative activities, counselling, and access to meals. Freedom Centres are strategically located within close proximity to public transportation for ease of access, and within a close radius of various affordable accommodation, medical and psychological services, educational institutions and employment opportunities, to provide survivors ease of access to essential services and assist in reaching independence.

TIERED AFTERCARE

A21’s Tiered Aftercare model provides a continuum of trauma-informed aftercare services that adapt to survivors’ specific and unique set of needs, to provide assistance at each stage in the progression to independence. Comprising four levels, the first level offers crisis intervention for survivors in the initial stages following their identification and recovery from trafficking situations. At Level 1, a survivor’s short-term immediate needs are provided for, with support such as a care package, emergency accommodation, medical consultation, psychological assessment, transportation, and relocation or repatriation. Survivors within Level 2 receive practical support tailored to their needs, including remote or face-to-face meetings with an A21 caseworker, an individualised A21 Case Management Plan, the opportunity to participate in A21’s Life Programs, financial assistance for accommodation, living costs, health care and basic needs, ongoing medical, psychological and dental treatment, education and employment support, and legal assistance. Remote case management support is offered to survivors who are unable to conduct in-person case management meetings, or residing in a distant location from an A21 Freedom Centre or office. Level 3 offers more comprehensive holistic aftercare services that aim to bring a survivor to
a place of stability, independent living, and engagement with their community. Level 3 services are provided to survivors who live within close proximity to an A21 Freedom Centre or office to enable more extensive support and engagement with the program, and include services offered at Level 2. Level 4 supports survivors transitioning to independent living in the community, and prepares a survivor to graduate from the A21 Aftercare program. Graduation signifies that a survivor has built the necessary skills and foundation to live independently without further assistance from A21. Following graduation, caseworkers provide follow-up to support and assist in sustained restoration as needed.

**CASE MANAGEMENT PLANS**

An individual survivor case management plan is developed for survivors who require aftercare support beyond Level 1 crisis intervention. Case management plans are written by caseworkers, often in collaboration with the survivor, to identify the survivor’s unique goals and needs in the areas of accommodation, medical and psychological treatment, employment, education, social support, legal assistance, A21 Life Programs, financial assistance, and relocation and repatriation. A survivor’s initial Assessment of Survivor Outcomes (ASO) scores identify their strengths and vulnerabilities and inform their direct service provision needs that are outlined in their initial case management plan. Case management plans are reviewed and updated every six months to ensure that the support being provided is appropriate to the survivor’s progress and to take into consideration any changes in circumstances or needs. When a survivor enters Level 4, an Independence Plan is written to review any areas of functioning where a survivor may require additional support to bring them to a place of independence prior to graduating from the program.

**LIFE PROGRAMS**

A21’s Life Programs are a collection of strengths-based, trauma-informed group and individual programs, designed to equip and empower survivors with the knowledge, skills and strategies to overcome trauma and move towards living a life of restoration and independence. Key programs include: i) Life Skills - an A21 curriculum developed to provide basic and practical living skills to assist survivors reintegrating into the community; ii) Freedom to Flourish - a survivor-created peer support program for female survivors of trafficking; and iii) Brave Hearts, Strong Minds - an A21 group based program which equips child and adolescent survivors of trafficking and exploitation with strategies to enhance their emotional resilience. Facilitated by A21 caseworkers, Life Programs may be completed in person, online, or via phone, individually or in a group setting with other survivors within A21’s Aftercare program.

**ACCOMMODATION**

A21 provides various accommodation options to support survivors’ unique housing needs. The A21 Home is an emergency shelter that accommodates survivors in the initial months following their identification and recovery. Within the A21 Home, survivors have the opportunity to rest and stabilise while receiving support and assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in planning their next steps and assessing further assistance options. A21 Emergency Accommodation provides survivors with safe short-term temporary accommodation such as hotels and hostels. A21 Long-Term Accommodation support is offered to survivors through financial rent assistance, or an A21 apartment. A21 apartments are leased by A21 and located within close proximity to a Freedom Centre, providing survivors with safe and stable independent accommodation for up to 12 months to allow them the opportunity to focus on establishing health and wellness, build community, and pursue education and employment pathways to help prepare them for graduating from the A21 Aftercare Program and living independently. Finally, A21 Foster Care provides safe family-based foster care to minor survivors in Cambodia where it has been deemed unsafe for them to return home to their own family, often due to risk of re-exploitation.

**A21 SURVIVOR RELOCATION SERVICES**

A21 Survivor Relocation Services (A21 SRS) provides safe transportation for survivors who require domestic and international relocation and repatriation. A21 SRS offers comprehensive services according to identified needs, including any legal assistance required to facilitate a relocation or repatriation, such as procuring identification; safe transportation; suitable accommodation; and referral to partner organisations at their end destination.

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1 The Assessment of Survivor Outcomes (ASO), developed by International Justice Mission (IJM), serves as a tool to measure the progress that survivors of violence (including but not limited to forced labour, commercial sexual exploitation, child sexual assault, and online sexual exploitation of children) make toward restoration. The ASO serves as a case management tool that assists to identify a survivor’s areas of strengths and vulnerabilities, enabling caseworkers to develop an individually tailored Survivor Case Management Plan; and as an impact measurement tool that provides data on the effectiveness of aftercare programing by assessing survivor progress. The ASO tool assesses a survivor in six key domains of functioning that are critical to their restoration: Safety, Legal Protection, Mental Wellbeing, Economic Empowerment and Education, Social Support, and Physical Wellbeing. A21 caseworkers complete the ASO at case intake to get a baseline understanding of a survivor’s functioning, at case closure to assess whether a survivor has achieved restoration and if they require additional services, and at a 12 month follow-up to identify whether the survivor’s restoration is sustained.
**GENERATIONAL SUPPORT**

In many cases A21 provides generational support to the children or family of survivors receiving direct services. For example, with a minor survivor, support may be provided to the family of the child survivor to assist in reducing vulnerability and promoting independence, or where the survivor is a parent, support may be provided to the child(ren) of the survivor. A21 recognises the importance of supporting those who are responsible for caring for minors to reduce the risks of revictimisation and the need to support adult survivors who are parents to give their children an opportunity to grow up in healthy, independent homes, thereby breaking the cycle of victimisation.

**CASE CLOSURE**

A21’s Aftercare program has three types of case closure categorisations; exit, transitioned out, and graduation. An exit closure occurs when contact is unable to be made with the survivor for a specific period of time. Survivors transition out of the program after agreed upon services and referrals have been provided and no further assistance is required. Survivors graduate the program following their active engagement in A21 Aftercare programs, including Freedom Center attendance and completion of Life Programs, the development of an Independence Plan and the observation that the survivor is independent and has low vulnerability to revictimisation.