

A21 Crisis Ready Analysis

Human trafficking is a dark topic, with the entirety of the subject based on a crisis. It is nearly impossible not to have potential adverse events in this field, but by asking the right questions, A21 can prepare for any arising issues. Internal and External crises may arise with everything from survivor aftercare, A21 employee health and safety, false trafficking perceptions, and marketing and fundraising.

Discussion questions to proactively identify crises

- **Survivor Aftercare** – Are the A21 Home workers trained in trauma counseling? Is the A21 Home secure? Do we have enough staff to handle the number of incoming residents and their needs adequately? What are the rules/guidelines for keeping everyone in the home safe? What services are provided for survivors while in the A21 Home? How long can they stay in the A21 Home? What happens if a trafficker finds a survivor? What happens if a survivor harms themselves or another resident? What programs can we use to get survivors independent housing? What programs are offered to survivors when they leave the A21 Home? What personal items do survivors need to be successful? Can we find jobs for survivors while keeping them safe from their traffickers?
- **A21 Employee Health and Safety** – What services are provided to A21 staff (mental health, physical health, etc.) What resources can we provide for social workers in the A21 Home? Are there trauma hotlines for workers as well? What do we do if something happens in the home while they are on duty? What happens if traffickers threaten the A21 offices?
- **False Trafficking Perceptions** – How do we stop false framing of human trafficking in society? How do we show common trafficking scenarios without scaring the public?
- **Marketing and Fundraising** – How do we show human trafficking in marketing without becoming inappropriate? How do we spread life-saving information without traffickers seeing it? How do we reveal the magnitude of a hidden crime? How do we advertise A21 without seeming like a morality-indicator? How do we ask for money and goods appropriately? How do we ask for grants and donations from large organizations?

Stakeholders Informed During a Crisis

- Nick and Christine Caine, Chief Operation Officers
- Katherine Corich, Board Chair
- United States Chamber of Commerce
- The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
- Marriott International
- Row for Freedom
- 2021 Super Bowl LV
- Liberty University
- Polaris Project

Communication Channels

Conference Calls and Meetings: A21 will immediately hold meetings with the Board of Directors, stakeholders, partners, and all employees to ensure everyone is aware before the media.

Social Media: A21 social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn) will display links to the A21 website crisis statement, allowing A21 to spread the news fast and to a broad audience.

Website and Intranet: A21's website will have its definitive statement on the crisis and details to gain more information. A21's internal website (intranet) will also a personalized employee crisis statement and means for employees to gain more knowledge or communicate with leadership on the crisis.

Press Releases and Media Collaboration: A21 will submit a press release to the media and work with print and broadcast media to transparently detail the crisis.

Potential High-risk Scenarios

Scenario One – A21 Home resident commits suicide: Victims of human trafficking often experience depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, and suicidal thoughts. Statistics show that 33% of rape victims have contemplated suicide¹. With the intense and horrifying nature of human trafficking, A21 needs to plan for possible trauma-related incidences.

With an A21 Home suicide, nearly all aspects of the organization suffer. A21 Home residences and employees will most likely need trauma therapy, recovery and communication options, time off or leave, and may need to relocate locations. A new site for the A21 Home will take resources and funding away from survivor services, and the reputation for a safe and healthy environment for survivors will suffer drastically.

There is a significant chance the news of an A21 Home resident committing suicide could go viral. The emotional component of the report, along with the location of where the incident took place. The A21 Home is supposed to be a safe place for residents to access trauma therapists and healthy coping exercises. Viral false information can spread about the A21 Home not being a safe place for human trafficking survivors.

Scenario Two – A21 employee caught stealing grant funding: Although A21 prides itself on hiring transparent and trustworthy employees, there are always chances that an employee may steal money or goods from their organization. According to reports, U.S. employees steal \$50 billion from their employers². While this is not assumed to occur at an anti-human trafficking nonprofit, it is certainly a possibility.

¹ Kilpatrick, Dean G. Ph.D. "The Mental Health Impact of Rape." National Violence Against Women Prevention Research Center (2000).

² Boehmer, Madeline. "25 Jaw Dropping Stats about Employee Fraud." SheerID (2016).

Depending on the size of the stolen grant funding, business operations may suffer greatly. A21 relies heavily on accurate reports and budgets to maintain the A21 Home, survivor programs, marketing efforts, and employee salaries. Fellow employees may question the security of the organization and if their future earnings are secure.

The potential for a viral media story about the grant theft in A21 is high. Stealing funds, especially from a humanitarian organization, is a scandal and something that sparks interest. If A21 cannot combat the viral posts about the theft, the public may view A21 as sloppy and unorganized with our finances and employee vetting process.

Escalation Strategy

When presented with a new crisis, A21 will respond as follows:

- **Crisis Team:** The Vice President of Public Relations will lead the internal A21 team on all crisis communications strategies. The A21 President will be the official spokesperson for A21, with guidance and preparation from HH Strategic Communications.
- **Social Media Monitoring:** The Vice President of Public Relations will assign a select number of marketing staff employees to monitor the crisis responses on all A21 social media platforms, website, and intranet. Daily monitoring reports will be delivered to the Vice President of Public Relations to determine the appropriate response based on the number of calls, mentions, and posts.
- **Timing:** The A21 President will submit a holding statement to the press on the next day following the crisis. The A21 President will work with HH Strategic Communications, the A21 Vice President of Public Relations, and the crisis communication team to format and plan the holding statement. The Vice President of Public Relations will work with the A21 crisis communications team to follow the holding statement that day with any appropriate alerts such as press releases, social media posts, website statements, and media communications.
- **Key Audiences:** A21 will inform all the following parties: stakeholders, partners, affiliates, employees, and A21 Home residents.

Resolution Plan: Scenario One – A21 Home resident commits suicide

With a devastating crisis like death, A21 will sincerely apologize to the media, public, employees, and A21 Home residences. The A21 Home is supposed to be a safe place for human trafficking survivors, and it is A21's job to provide a welcoming and secure environment.

A21 will honor the life of the deceased by sharing her courageous story of survival with the world. Her death shows the impact of the horrors of human trafficking, and through perspective and awareness, the public has a more significant effect of awareness. A21 will take this heartbreaking situation and encourage others to get involved with anti-human trafficking in their communities.

A21 will now have a suicide prevention specialist train all A21 Home employees to be made vigilant of signs and signals of possible suicide. With advanced education on mental health and trauma, A21 Home staff will better help a survivor through a difficult situation. A21 will also make therapy sessions mandatory for all incoming A21 Home survivors. With so many individuals living in the A21 Home, professionals need to have the ability to monitor the mindset and potentially harmful circumstances.