

MIND BUILDERS AFRICA (MBA)

BRIDGE-IN-AGRICULTURE PROGRAM: SAFEGUARDING TRAINING GUIDE

1. WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding means protecting you from harm, abuse, or mistreatment during this program.

You have the right to:

- Feel safe and always respected
- Learn in an environment free from harassment or abuse
- Report concerns without fear of retaliation
- Receive support if something goes wrong

Our Promise to You:

- We take all concerns seriously
- Your reports will be handled confidentially
- You will not face retaliation for speaking up
- We act quickly to protect participants

2. UNDERSTANDING ABUSE & MISCONDUCT

What Does Abuse Look Like?

Know the warning signs so you can protect yourself and others:

Physical Abuse

- Unwanted touching, hugging, or physical contact
- Any form of hitting, pushing, or physical intimidation

Sexual Harassment & Abuse

- Inappropriate comments about your body or appearance
- Sexual jokes or advances
- Requests for romantic or sexual favors
- Being asked to meet privately in inappropriate settings (hotels, private rooms)
- Sharing or requesting sexual photos or messages

Verbal & Emotional Abuse

- Insults, name-calling, or belittling comments
- Threatening or intimidating language
- Public humiliation or mockery

Exploitation & Extortion

- Promises of grants, loans, or jobs in exchange for favors
- Requests for money or gifts

- Threats to fail you or remove you from the program
- Giving you unfair advantages in exchange for personal favors

Online Abuse

- Inappropriate messages on WhatsApp, Facebook, or other platforms
- Sharing your personal information without consent
- Cyberbullying or online harassment

Understanding Power Dynamics

Staff, facilitators, and trainers have power over participants. It is NEVER acceptable for them to:

- Ask you out on dates
- Request your personal phone number for non-program reasons
- Meet you alone outside of training hours
- Make you feel you “owe” them anything

Remember: If someone in authority asks you to do something that makes you uncomfortable, it's NOT your fault. You have the right to say no and report it.

3. UNDERSTANDING CONSENT

Consent means:

- Clear, voluntary agreement
- You can change your mind at any time
- Saying “yes” to one thing doesn’t mean “yes” to everything
- Silence or uncertainty is NOT consent

You never have to:

- Share personal information (phone number, address, social media)
- Accept gifts or favors from staff
- Meet staff or facilitators outside of official program activities
- Do anything that makes you uncomfortable to stay in the program

4. YOUR ROLE IN CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Do:

- Treat staff, facilitators, and fellow participants with respect
- Respect others’ boundaries and personal space
- Ask before taking or sharing photos of other participants
- Speak up if you see someone being mistreated
- Support fellow participants who report concerns

Don't:

- Share others' personal information without their permission
- Make inappropriate comments about others' appearance or bodies
- Engage in bullying, gossip, or exclusion
- Pressure others to share personal information
- Ignore warning signs if you see someone being mistreated

What Is Bystander Intervention?

If you see another participant being mistreated:

- Check on them privately: "Are you okay? I noticed [situation]. Do you need support?"
- Offer to help them report: "Would you like me to go with you to report this?"
- Document what you saw: Write down dates, times, and what happened
- Report it yourself: if the person is too scared or if you witness serious misconduct

You can make a difference by not staying silent.

5. HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN

Who Can You Report To?

MBA Safeguarding Officers:

- Belinda Bornmai - Phone: 0543663640 _Email: bnbornmai@mindbuildersafrica.org
- Joshua Owusu - Phone: 02416446617 _Email: jowusu@mindbuildersafrica.org
- Naa Koryoe Tetteh - Phone: 0596888792 _Email: ntkoryoe@mindbuildersafrica.org
- Valerie Alabie - Phone: 0500885145 _Email: valabie@mindbuildersafrica.org

Or report to:

- Any Team Lead at the training site
- Any MBA staff member you trust

Ways to Report

- In Person: Speak directly to a Safeguarding Officer or Team Lead
- By Phone/WhatsApp: Call or message the Safeguarding Officers
- By Email: Send a detailed message to Safeguarding Focal Person
- Anonymous Report: If available: describe anonymous reporting mechanism, e.g., suggestion box, online form]

What Information Should You Include?

- What happened: Describe the incident clearly
- When it happened: Date and time
- Where it happened: Location (training centre, hotel, online, etc.)
- Who was involved: Names if you know them
- Witnesses: Anyone else who saw what happened

- Any evidence: Screenshots, messages, photos (if relevant)

Don't worry if you don't have all this information. Report what you know.

What Happens After You Report?

Within 24 hours:

- A Safeguarding Officer will contact you privately
- They will listen to your concern without judgment
- You'll discuss what support you need

Within 72 hours:

- Your concerns will be escalated to CrossBoundary and the MasterCard Foundation
- An investigation will begin
- You may be asked to provide more details
- The person accused will be separated from you during the investigation

Ongoing:

- You'll receive regular updates on the process
- Support services will be made available to you
- Your safety and wellbeing are the priority

Your Rights During the Process

- Confidentiality: Only people who need to know will be informed
- No retaliation: You cannot be punished, failed, or removed for reporting
- Support: Access to counselling or other support services
- Updates: You have the right to know what's happening with your report

6. SUPPORT RESOURCES

If You Need Immediate Help

Emergency Services:(Police, Ambulance)

MBA Support Services

- Counselling referrals available through Safeguarding Officers
- Peer support groups [if available]
- Follow-up check-ins after reporting

Know Your Legal Rights

Some of the behaviours described in this guide are illegal under Ghanaian law, including:

- Sexual harassment
- Sexual assault

- Extortion and bribery
- Fraud

You have the right to report these matters to the police. MBA will support you if you choose to take legal action.

7. CASE STUDY & DISCUSSION

Scenario

Esi, a fruit juice seller, and her employee Ama attended a BRIDGE-In-Agriculture training with Mind Builders Africa.

During the last day of training, Ama seemed noticeably withdrawn, although she was active and cheerful at the start of the training period.

Her boss, Esi, confides in one of the MBA staff that Ama is uncomfortable with one of the facilitators, Mr. K, who has been making inappropriate comments about her appearance, such as:

“You look too beautiful to be focusing on baking pastries and confectioneries. I could get you a better job if you’re nice to me. I don’t bite.”

Esi also mentions that Mr. K often asked Ama to meet him at his hotel in the evenings after training closes to “discuss her progress,” and Ama felt very uneasy afterward.

Discussion Questions

Work in small groups to discuss:

- What type(s) of abuse or safeguarding concerns does this situation represent?
- What are the warning signs that something was wrong?
- What should Esi do immediately to support Ama?
- Who should Esi or the MBA staff member report this concern to?
- What should happen to Mr. K during the investigation?
- How could Ama have been better protected? What preventive measures could MBA put in place?
- Why might Ama have felt unable to report this herself?
- If you were another participant and noticed Ama’s change in behavior, what could you have done?

Key Takeaways from This Case

- Sexual harassment - Mr. K’s comments and behavior
- Exploitation - Promising job opportunities for “favors”
- Abuse of power - Using his position as facilitator inappropriately

- Warning signs - Ama's change in behavior, withdrawal
- Importance of bystander intervention - Esi speaking up helped protect Ama
- Immediate action needed - Separate Mr. K from participants, begin investigation
- Reporting works- When concerns are shared, MBA can take action

8. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What if I'm not sure if something is "serious enough" to report?

A: Report it anyway. Let the Safeguarding Officers decide. It's better to report something small than to ignore something serious.

Q: What if the person who made me uncomfortable is a Safeguarding Officer?

A: Report to any other Safeguarding Officer, Team Lead, or MBA staff member you trust. You can also report directly to [insert external contact if available].

Q: Will the person I report find out it was me?

A: We protect your confidentiality, but in some cases, the person may be able to guess. We will discuss with you how to keep you safe.

Q: What if I report something and nothing happens?

A: Follow up with the Safeguarding Officer. If you're not satisfied, escalate to [insert senior management contact]. Your concern matters.

Q: Can I report something that happened to someone else?

A: Yes! If you witness misconduct, you should report it.

Q: What if the abuse is happening online?

A: Take screenshots, save messages, and report immediately. Online abuse is just as serious as in-person abuse.

Q: Will reporting affect my participation in the program?

A: No. You cannot be removed or disadvantaged for making a good-faith report.

9. SAFEGUARDING AGREEMENT

By participating in the BRIDGE-In-Agric Program, I agree to:

- Treat all staff, facilitators, and participants with respect
- Report any safeguarding concerns I witness or experience
- Respect others' privacy and boundaries
- Follow the guidelines in this training
- Support the creation of a safe learning environment

I understand that:

- I have the right to feel safe during this program
- I can report concerns without fear of retaliation
- MBA takes all safeguarding concerns seriously
- Help and support are available if I need them

QUICK REFERENCE CARD

This section should be printed separately as a wallet-sized card for participants

IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE, REPORT IT

MBA Safeguarding Officers:

- Joshua: [Phone] [Email]
- Belinda: [Phone] [Email]
- Naa Koryoe: [Phone] [Email]

Emergency:

Warning Signs of Abuse:

- Inappropriate touching or comments
- Requests to meet alone outside training
- Promises of money/jobs for favors
- Threats or intimidation
- Being asked for personal information

Remember:

- It's NOT your fault
- You have the right to say NO
- Report concerns immediately
- You won't face retaliation

Your safety matters. Speak up.

TRAINER NOTES

Facilitation Guidelines

Before the Session:

- Review all case study answers
- Prepare to handle sensitive disclosures
- Have Safeguarding Officer contact details ready

- Create a safe, judgment-free environment

During the Session:

- Use trauma-informed language
- Don't force anyone to share personal experiences
- Watch for participants who seem distressed
- Remind participants that reports can be made privately after the session

Key Messages to Emphasize:

- Abuse is NEVER the victim's fault
- Power dynamics make it hard to say no
- Reporting helps protect everyone
- MBA has zero tolerance for abuse

If Someone Discloses Abuse During Training:

- Listen without judgment
- Thank them for sharing
- Don't ask for details in front of the group
- Speak with them privately after the session
- Follow reporting procedures immediately
- Offer support resources

Case Study Answer Guide:

- Types of abuse: Sexual harassment, exploitation, abuse of power
- Warning signs: Withdrawal, behavior change, avoiding Mr. K
- Immediate actions: Report to Safeguarding Officer immediately, ensure Ama's safety, separate her from Mr. K
- Who to report to: Safeguarding Officers (Belinda, Naa Koryoe, Joshua, Valerie) or Team Lead
- Mr. K should: Be immediately removed from contact with participants pending investigation
- Preventive measures: Clear code of conduct for facilitators, supervision, regular check-ins with participants, reporting mechanisms clearly communicated
- Why Ama didn't report: Fear of not being believed, power imbalance, fear of losing program opportunity, shame
- Bystander actions: Check on Ama, offer support, report concerns, accompany her to make a report

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