of schools use paraffin lamps as alternative source of lighting when electricity is cut.

Discussion and conclusion Majority of Ugandan schools are not prepared to deal with fires. Fire safety policies and standards should be addressed by the Ministry of Education and School Management.

0534 | **THE PREPAREDNESS OF UGANDAN SCHOOLS FOR FIRES**

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Introduction There have been numerous media reports on school fires in Uganda. In April 2008, a primary school dormitory caught fire and 20 children burnt to death. This incident increased public interest. One year later, an assessment on school preparedness was performed.

Methods 50 schools (day and boarding) were randomly chosen and stratified by level of education (20 primary, 20 secondary, 10 post secondary) in the five divisions of Kampala. A questionnaire was administered to key informants who were school teachers. Trained research assistants assessed training, fire equipment and the school environment. Direct observation was done. Frequency analysis was done.

Results Schools (72%) were government owned with 92% mixed students. Schools (50%) had ever been trained on fire safety. Schools (19%) had trained before the incident. Fire extinguishers usage, fire fighting and causes of fires were part of training course. There was no formal training curriculum in schools. Training lasted from a minimum of 1 h to maximum of 1 week. 73% of teachers trained passed on the knowledge to their students. 60% of schools had persons in charge of fires. 84% of schools had no fire safety plans in place. 34% of schools had fire assemblies. 68% had fire extinguishers that were installed after the incident. 8% had fire alarm system in place. 68% had fire exits or escapes. 18% of schools had history of fires. Five schools had fire outbreaks in dormitories and received no help from fire brigade. 66% of schools had kitchen 1–60 m away from dormitories and classrooms. 22%