

## Introduction

Injuries are the biggest threat to child survival and the leading cause of disability among children below five years. Despite the high burden globally, little is known about injuries in many rural settings in terms of type, causes and the associated factors.

The main objective of this study was to determine the factors contributing to injuries among children below five years in Birembo sub county, Kibaale District.

## Results

A total of 201 caretakers participated in the cross-sectional study. Most of the caretakers came from households mainly headed by a man (66%). More than a third (35%) of the caretakers was of age 20-29 years. Caretakers were mainly females (63%) of secondary education (32%) with at least a child (41%). Children were mostly (45%) of 25-26 months old, females (54%) and with any disability (79%). Burns was the most common type and cause of injury experienced by children below five years, 52% and 46% respectively.

Children 37-59 months were 2.1 times more likely to experience injuries than those of 0-12 months (IRR=2.1, CI: 1.3-3.4; p-value= 0.004). Male children were 1.2 times more likely to experience injuries than the females (IRR=1.2, CI: 1.1-1.4; p-value= 0.008). Children living with relatives were 0.7 times more likely to experience injuries than those staying with biological parents (IRR=0.7, CI: 0.5-0.9; p-value= 0.035). Children attending school were 0.8 times more likely to experience injuries than those staying at home (IRR=0.8, CI: 0.7-0.9; p-value= 0.044).

Children from households using charcoal as the main fuel of cooking were 1.4 times more likely to experience injuries than those using wood (IRR=1.4, CI: 1.1-1.6, p-value= 0.000).

## Conclusion

The proportion of children below five years with injuries in this setting is high; an indication of high burden the children in this setting are undergoing. Burns are the commonest form of injury a true reflection of the rural setting where traffic is less common. Children experiencing injuries in this setting are more likely to be of age 36 to 59 months, males and come from households where caretakers are just relatives. Cooking using charcoal increases the risk of injuries among children below five years in this setting.

## Recommendation

Households using charcoal stoves should be advised on where to place the stoves when cooking.

Having designated places for cooking that are not easily accessed by the children during cooking hours, for example the kitchen should be enforced in this setting.

Parents should endeavor to entrust their children with responsible relatives who can watch them when their playing at all times.