

# Men frustrating fight against HIV/Aids - minister

**Unwilling.** Health minister, Ruth Aceng, says men's refusal to test for HIV is hindering government's efforts in the fight against the disease.

BY LILLIAN NAMAGEMBE  
lnamagembe@ug.nationmedia.com

**KAMPALA.** The continued laxity among men to test for HIV and enroll on anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) has

remained a major hindrance to the government efforts to eliminate HIV/Aids by 2030, the Health minister has said.

Dr Jane Ruth Aceng said the viral load remains persistently high among men, making it easy for them to transmit the virus to other people and cause new infections.

"The men are the problem. When we look through our statistics, very

few men have tested for HIV and very few men are enrolled for treatment," Dr Aceng said.

Sixty five per cent of those enrolled on treatment, Dr Aceng noted "are women. If you are left with 35 per cent, taking away the children, the rest are men. So, who is spreading the infection?"

Last year, the joint United Nations Programme on HIV/Aids (Unaids)

warned of a looming crisis unless Uganda controls the 227 new HIV infections daily.

However, with a prevalence of 7.3 per cent, Uganda has an estimated 1.6 million HIV infected people and is higher among female at 7.5 per cent compared to 5.0 per cent for men. The minister also warned the youth against living a complacent lifestyle.

Dr Aceng was speaking last Friday

during the celebrations to mark the 10th anniversary of Alive Medical Services, a community based health clinic in Namuwongo, one of the poorest and most populated Kampala suburbs.

*Daily Monitor* newspaper and Kfm, both products of Monitor Publications Limited (MPL), joined a fundraising drive to raise money to support more than 13,000 HIV/Aids patients.