Tuberculosis is curable but it remains one of the biggest killers in Uganda. The disease continues to kill in part because the country is detecting only 57 per cent and successively treating 75 per cent of all cases, writes Saturday Monitor’s Evelyn Lirri.

Minister acknowledges Health Ministry’s record Mulungu acknowledges that not enough has been done to control tuberculosis in the country, “this is not an easy disease to control and eradicate and with the support of the donors, single drug treatment and the use of antibiotics like rifampicin and isoniazid, the disease is not easy to control. I think the country is making a lot of progress, but we need to do more.”

The disease is effectively treated and cured. There is no reason why Uganda should not end tuberculosis in 15 to 20 years, according to Dr. Okot, the number of TB cases continues to rise. This is a case only of Health Minister Mulungu and UNAIDS programme, Monday, November 14, 2011. According to Dr. Okot, Dr. Okot, a senior consultant on TB at Mulago National Referral Hospital, TB is a disease that predominantly affects the lungs but can also affect other parts of the body. The bacteria, Mycobacterium tuberculosis, is caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis, which causes the TB disease, and takes as long as two years. Although it affects all age groups, people between 15-45 years are most affected. Most TB cases take months or even years before they manifest in the patient. Most TB patients are young children and people suffering from diabetes and the diseases get the infections on the most of opposition because of their weakened immune system. The isolation of the treated patients from the rest of the patients at the end of the treatment is proven to be the most reducing factor. In the country, the isolation of the patients is done for two years. It is only about 50 per cent of patients to be treated in drug resistant TB cases.

Low detection Despite this relatively easy and cost effective TB treatment, the detection of new smear-positive TB cases has been low at 57 per cent, suggesting that the 2015 target of a 75 per cent detection rate through microscopy examination and culture of sputum can be missed by the United Nations. This is mainly due to non-understanding of the procedure and the efficacy of treatment. According to the National TB Programme, up to 2012, four out of 10 people who were supposed to be treated for TB patients were tested positive. The policy guidelines are in place and should be operationalized fast, he said.

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Drug resistance Tuberculosis is a major cause of illness and death worldwide, especially in Africa and Asia. Each year the disease kills almost two million people. The disease is also a prevalent problem in Uganda. All about the disease Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial disease that is caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis. It primarily affects the lungs but can also affect other organs, including the brain, bones and joints. Tuberculosis is a lung disease that is often asymptomatic or presents with symptoms such as cough, fever, weight loss and night sweats. The disease can spread from one person to another through the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. The bacteria can also be transmitted through the skin by a vaccine or through the use of contaminated needles for drug injections. Tuberculosis is curable and in the end curable. Tuberculosis is curable but it remains one of the biggest killers in Uganda. The disease continues to kill in part because the country is detecting only 57 per cent and successively treating 75 per cent of all cases.