

Common Market for
Eastern and Southern Africa



COVID- 19 IN COMESA MEASURES IN PLACE IN MEMBER STATES

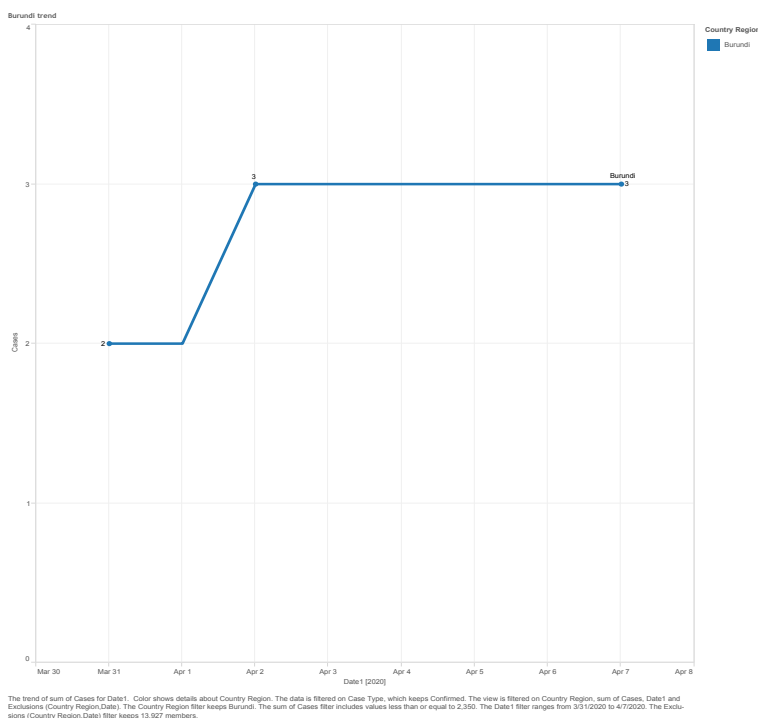
7th April 2020



This publication comprises a listing of the measures that COMESA Member States have put in place to contain the spread of the Corona Virus; measures put in place to facilitate trade and support businesses and any other measures , such as those intended to protect the vulnerable from the impact of the spread of the virus. A trendline on the number of cases reported has been included.

Most governments are putting measures in place in response to changing circumstances and therefore this document will be updated on a regular basis.

COMESA Member States are: Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe



Burundi



Background

The first case of COVID-19 was reported in Burundi on 31st March 2020. As of 7th April, there were 3 confirmed cases

Preventive Measures put in Place

- Suspension of flights in and out of Burundi from 22nd March 2020.
- Closure of borders. Government of Burundi has closed the land border with Rwanda. Travellers are advised that if they plan to cross the border from Rwanda into Burundi, they may be denied entry
- Mandatory quarantine for 14 days for those exposed or suspected of having the virus.
- Limited access to hotel premises for the next two months at least.
- Sensitization and awareness campaigns have been created through TV and Radio.
- Installation of hand sanitizers and water for handwashing in public places.
- The authorities have asked hospitals to make beds available for potential cases (20 for each national hospital and 5 for each local hospitals).

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- No measures announced yet

Comoros



No cases of COVID19 have been reported

Preventive Measures put in Place

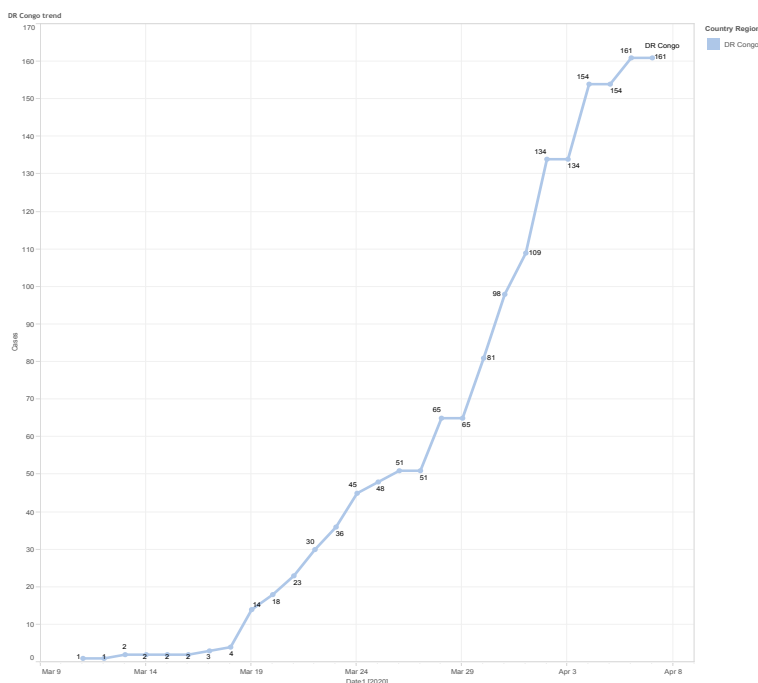
- Closure of all schools and educational institutions of higher learning for 30 days effective 20th March 2020
- Prohibitions of gatherings of more than 20 people.
- Suspension of traditional ceremonies.
- Transfers to vulnerable households have been raised.

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Import taxes on food, medicines, and items related to hygiene have been reduced by 30 percent.

Other Support

- A fund to support employees associated with airport operations has been created.



Democratic Republic of Congo



Background

The first coronavirus was confirmed on 10 March 2020. As of 7 April 2020, a total of 161 cases had been reported.

Preventive Measures put in Place

- Closure of all education centres, suspension of all religious and sporting events, and closure of bars and restaurants
- Suspension of all major international flights into and out of the country from 20 March until further notice.
- Closure of land borders with Angola, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda starting 21 March.
- Declaration of a 48-hour-long total confinement from 23 March 2020 over all Haut-Katanga Province.
- The government released 1,200 inmates from Makala Prison and other prison facilities on 7th April to decongest the prisons
- Issuance of a Presidential Decree on 24 March declaring State of Emergency which
 - o Banned passenger flights from Kinshasa to the provinces and vice versa
 - o Prohibited all gatherings of people in public spaces
 - o Shut down its land, sea and air borders to passenger, private or commercial travel and
 - o Established minimum services within the Public Service and institutions.
- Total lockdown of Kinshasa for four days from 28 March

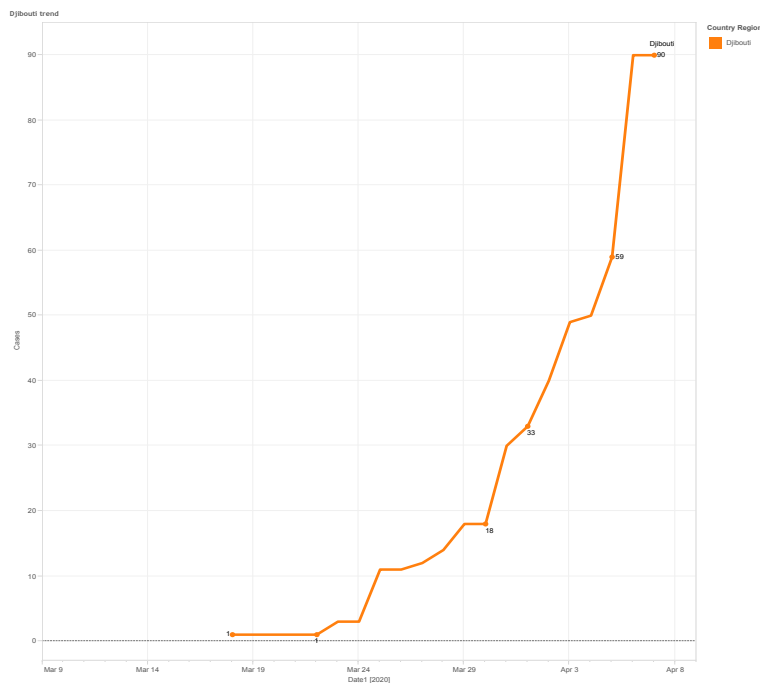
- Development of a response national plan with an estimated budget of \$135 million (0.3 percent of GDP) to:
 - o Strengthen early detection and surveillance and foster technical and operational coordination within the government
 - o Improve the quality of medical care to infected patients; and
- Develop effective preventive communication strategies and enhance medical logistic platforms.

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Freight services and emergency transportation exempted from the Presidential Decree ban subject to strict screening of crews before admittance.
- On 24 March the Central Bank (BCC) introduced measures to ease liquidity conditions such as:
 - o Reduction of policy rate to 7.5 percent
 - o Elimination of mandatory reserve requirements on demand deposits in local currency
 - o Extension of the maturity of emergency liquidity loans to up to 24 months.
 - o Postponement of the adoption of new minimum capital requirements
 - o Promotion of use of e-payments to reduce contamination risks in bank notes.

Other Support

- On 18 March, a COVID-19 Task Force and a coordination team established in the national Government



Djibouti



Background

First case detected on March 18th, 2020 and by 7th April 2020 90 cases were reported.

Preventive Measures put in Place

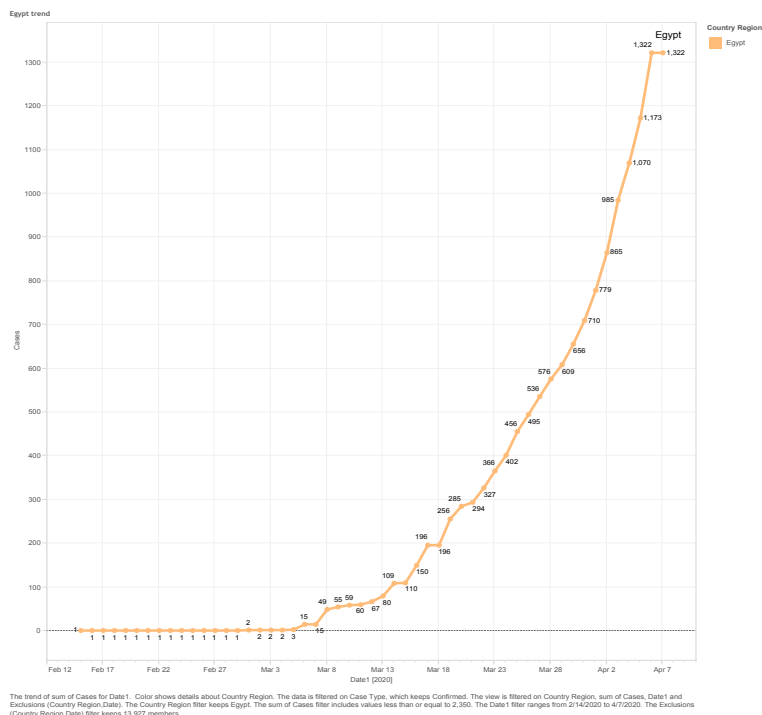
- A nation-wide lockdown is in place.
- All commercial flights suspended as well as train, boat and ship transport.
- Closure of educational institutions, religious/worship places, sports events and bars.
- Quarantine sites to be established for infected persons and contact tracing procedures put in place;
- Social distancing and other preventive measures including sanitization to be popularized by Government health agencies and the media.
- Essential services including medical supplies, food, and humanitarian services allowed to continue operating.

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Cargo movement of goods and services permitted.

Other Support

- The World Bank has provided Djibouti with US\$5 million credit towards efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to the rapid spread of COVID-19.
- The World Health Organization has delivered protective equipment to the Ministry of Health including goggles, surgical gowns, gloves, face masks and hand sprayers. WHO has also ordered 500 test machines and 80 respirators for COVID-19 preparedness in the country.



Egypt



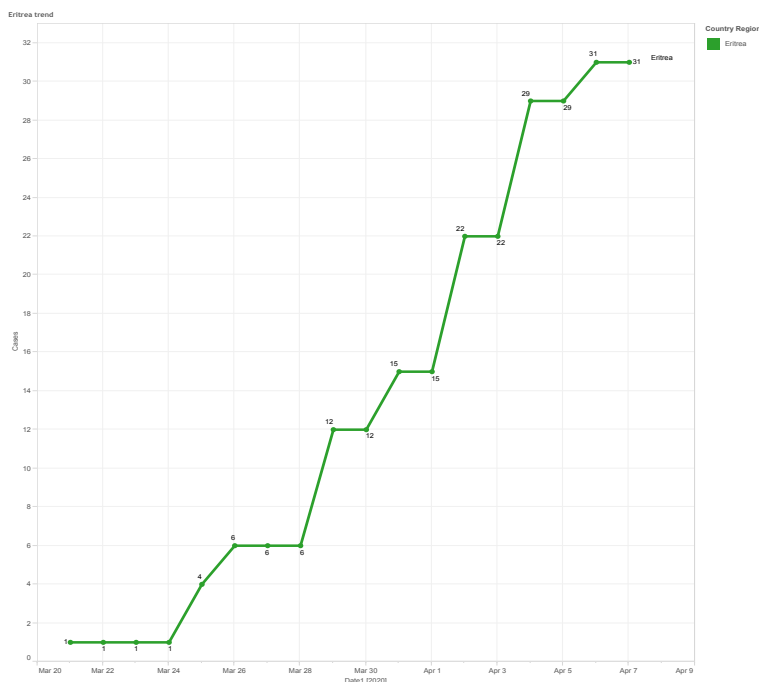
Background

The first case of COVID-19 was reported in Egypt on 14th February 2020. As of 7th April, there are 1322 confirmed cases

Preventive Measures put in Place

- Overnight curfew in place
- Restriction of public gatherings in schools, universities, cafes, bars, clubs, malls, hotels, public transport, public gathering places and tourist locations.
- Released over 4000 prisoners to prevent overcrowding in prisons and contain the spread of the Corona Virus
- Suspension of flights in and from Egypt until mid-April 2020
- Mandatory quarantine for visitors who test positive for coronavirus in a government isolation hospital.
- Adoption of an integrated plan which covers early detection, quarantine and treatment measures, as well as raising public awareness.
- Closure of schools, universities and colleges and all sporting activities.
- Securing food stuff and goods in preparation for the months ahead.
- Allocation of 100 billion Egyptian pounds (6.35 billion U.S. dollars) to finance the anti-COVID-19 comprehensive plan and its precautionary measures.

- Reduction in the price of natural gas for industrial use to USD 4.50 per million British Thermal Unit (mmBtu) (previously USD 6.00 per mmBtu for cement companies and USD 5.50 per mmBtu for metallurgy and ceramic manufacturers).
- Reduction in the price of electricity for “heavy industries” from Egyptian Pounds (EGP) 1.10 to EGP 0.10 (USD 0.0064) per kilowatt hour. Electricity prices are frozen for all other industries for the next 3-5 years.
- The Export Subsidy Fund will pay out the entire EGP 1 billion in arrears during March and April, plus 10% in cash payments to exporters during June 2020.
- The Central Bank of Egypt has decreased interest rates from 13.75% to 10.75%.
- The Central Bank of Egypt (NBE) has extended the tenor of all bank loans to businesses for six months and provides debt relief for individuals.
- The NBE has announced a one-year savings deposit program with a 15% interest rate.
- The Financial Regulatory Authority (FRA) has announced an extension to 15 June for Egyptian Stock Exchange (EGX) listed companies to submit their financial statements for Q4 2019 (original deadline 30 April).
- The FRA has ordered mortgage lenders, factoring and leasing companies to grant a six-month grace period upon request by clients.
- The exemption from the taxation of capital gains on securities listed on the EGX for Egyptian residents will be extended to 1 January 2022 (originally due to expire 17 May 2020).
- The exemption from the taxation of capital gains on securities listed on the Egyptian stock exchange (EGX) for non-residents will be made permanent.
- Withholding tax on dividends paid by companies listed on the EGX will be reduced from 10% to 5%.
- As from 25 March 2020, the Egyptian Ministry of Trade and Industry (the Foreign Trade Sector) has put the following measures in place:
 - a. documents, such as commercial invoices, would be accepted without being accredited by the Chambers of Commerce (this usually being a requirement) and
 - b. certificates of origin would be accepted without authorization from the Egyptian Embassy abroad.
- Citizens filing taxes online will not be charged the subscription fee for the use of the online filing portal.
- Stamp duty on transactions on the EGX will be reduced from 0.15% to 0.125% for non-residents.
- Stamp duty on EGX transactions will be reduced from 0.15% to 0.05% for Egyptian residents.
- All spot transactions on the EGX will be exempt from stamp duty
- Three-month extension for the payment of property taxes for companies in the industrial and tourism sector.



Eritrea



Background

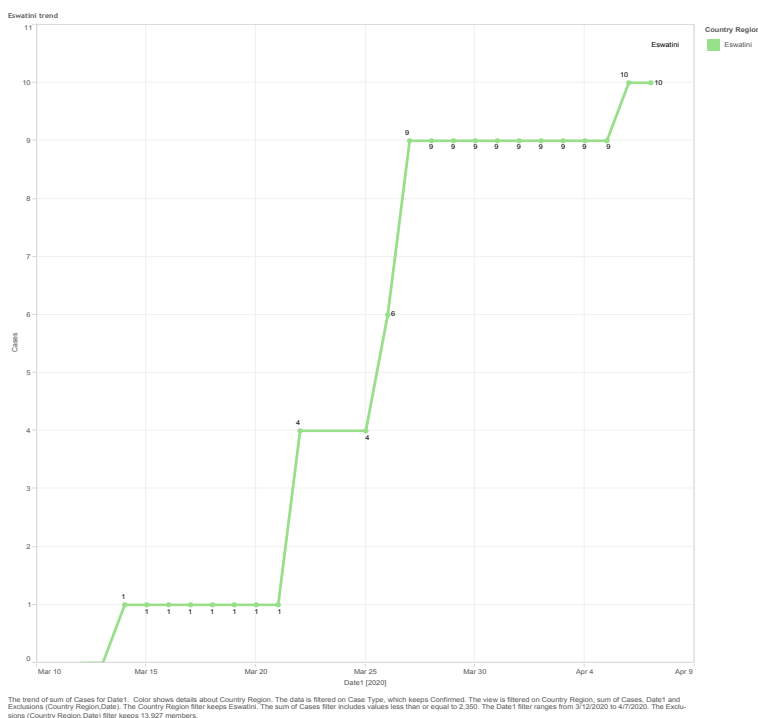
First case detected on March 21, 2020.
By 7th April 2020, 31 cases reported.

Preventive Measures put in Place

- A lockdown declared on 2nd April 2020.
- All citizens, except those engaged in indispensable developmental and security tasks directed to stay at home.
- Only a maximum of two members of a household are allowed to go out from their homes to buy essential food items during the day. This conditional permission also holds for emergency medical treatment.
- All trading activities and transactions banned. Similarly, weekly markets that are conducted in various parts of the country to remain closed.
- All government institutions ceased performing routine services and functions to focus on indispensable developmental and security tasks and most public sector employees to stay at home.
- People that have been confined to their homes are not allowed to use their private cars during the period of lockdown, except the citizens employed in institutions that have been allowed to continue their functions
- All public and private education institutions that will continue their operations will have to strictly observe social distancing and all personnel of the public and private bodies that will continue their operations will be issued with permits by their respective institutions.

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Citizens in the rural areas engaged in farming and animal husbandry allowed to continue their occupational activities.
- Food production, supply and processing enterprises as well as grocery stores, pharmacies and banks will continue to provide services. These institutions will close at 8:00 p.m. every evening.
- Major productive and service sectors (manufacturing, food processing, construction, and transport) allowed to continue their functions.



Eswatini



Background

The first Coronavirus case reported on 13 March 2020. As of 7 April 2020, a total of 10 cases had been reported.

Preventive Measures put in Place

- The Government declared a national state of emergency
- Declared a partial lockdown
- Suspension of private and public gatherings of 50 people or more
- Closure of schools
- Suspension of non-essential travel for all citizens
- Intensive screening and mandatory self-isolation for residents/citizens coming from high risk countries, and
- Restricted entry to foreign nationals coming from high-risk countries.

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

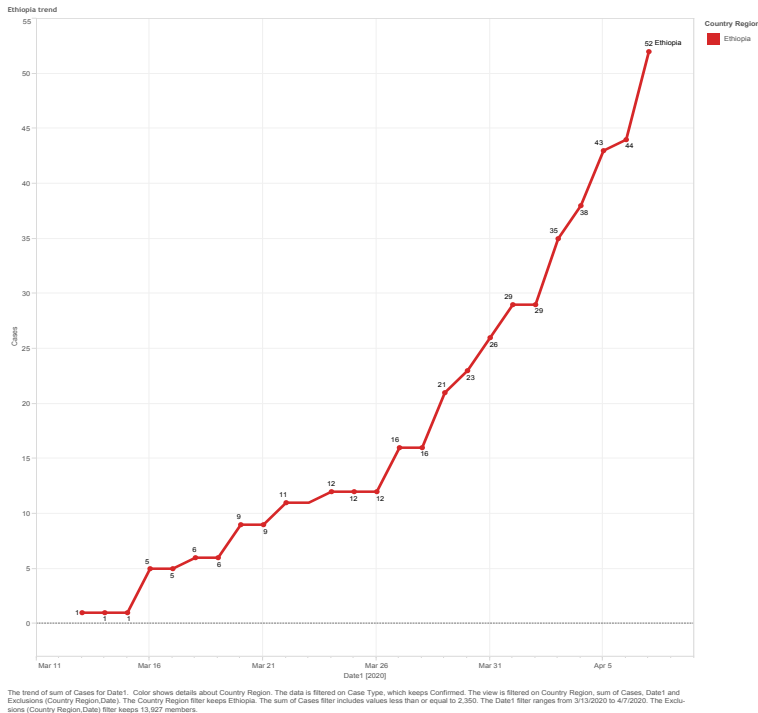
- The Government issued a supplementary budget for public healthcare in the amount of Emlangeni 100 million or 0.14 percent of GDP.
- Redirected low priority recurrent spending to the fight against the pandemic and health infrastructure.
- Put in-place revenue measures to mitigate the impact of the virus included:
 - o Authorization of taxpayers projecting losses to file loss provisional returns without payment requirement
 - o Extension of returns filing deadlines by 3 months
 - o Payment arrangements for taxpayers facing cash flow problems; waiver of penalties and interest for older tax debts
- Through the Central Bank of Eswatini:
 - o A reduction of the discount rate by 100 basis points to 5.5 percent; Reduced the reserve

requirement to 5 percent (from 6 percent); Reduced the liquidity requirement to 20 percent (from 25) for commercial banks and to 18 percent (from 22) for the development bank

- o Encouragement of greater use of electronic payments; and
- o Encouragement to banks to consider loan restructuring and repayment holidays.

Other Support

- The Government established the Cabinet sub-committee, Emergency Task Force, Regional and Sector Committees to implement the COVID-19 Emergency Plan



Ethiopia



Background

The first case of COVID-19 was detected in Ethiopia on 13th March 2020. As of 7th April, there were 44 confirmed cases

Preventive Measures put in Place

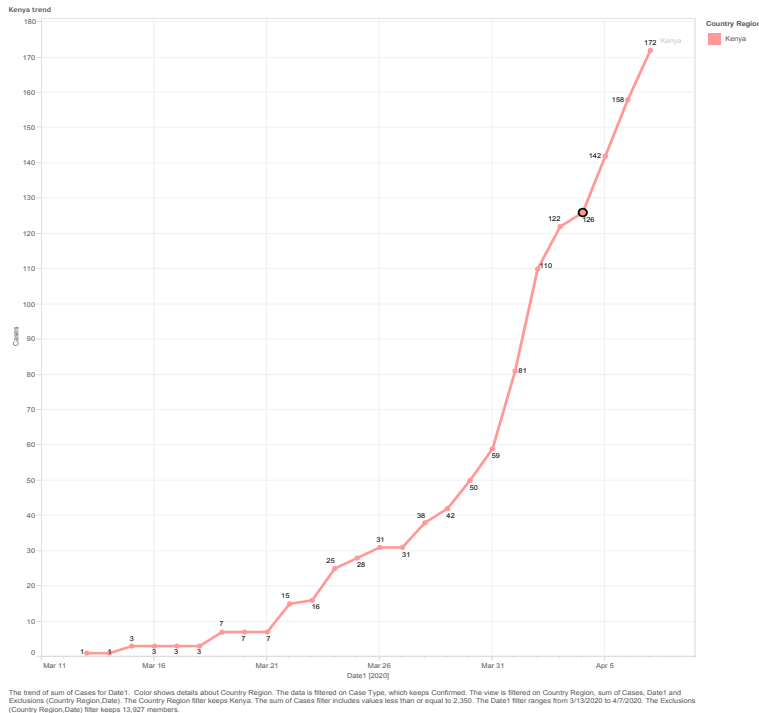
- Closing of all schools including institutions of higher learning and banning of public gatherings including sporting events for 15 days from 16th March 2020
- Released of over 4000 prisoners to prevent overcrowding in prisons and contain the spread of the coronavirus
- Postponement of elections from 29th August 2020. New date to be determined
- Effective 20th March, all arriving passengers face mandatory quarantine for 14 days
- Closure of its land borders to nearly all human traffic from 23rd March
- Closure of all-night clubs and places of entertainment effective 20th March until further notice
- Government employees ordered to work from home
- As of 1st April, suspension of mass gatherings in places of worship including mosques and churches

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Emergency support of \$82.8M from the World Bank to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19
- Relaxed rules for mobile banking and money transfers, opening the market to all local businesses to encourage people to go cashless to control the spread of coronavirus
- Ethiopian Airlines continues to operate concentrating mainly on cargo deliveries and scaled down passenger flights

Other Support

- The Prime Minister' office established a National Ministerial Committee led by the Minister of Health and a multisectoral COVID-19 Task Force



Kenya



Background

The first case of COVID-19 was reported in Kenya on 13 March 2020. As of 7th April, there are 172 confirmed cases

Preventive Measures put in Place

- Closure of all schools and educational institutions of higher learning for 30 days effective 20th March 2020
- Suspension of religious gatherings including Friday prayers in mosques, Sunday church services, weddings, for 30 days.
- Minimised attendance of social gatherings like weddings, funerals, malls for a period of 30 days.
- Minimised congestion in public transport and limiting visitors to hospitalised patients in both public and private hospitals.
- Public transport, hospitals and shopping malls are encouraged to provide soap, water and hand sanitisers and ensure that all their vehicles and premises are regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Government registries and the courts are closed except for the handling of emergency matters.
- Government offices, businesses and companies have been encouraged to allow employees to work from home, with the exception of employees working in critical or essential services.
- Imposition of a curfew from 1900-0500 hrs.
- Development of a local testing kit for COVID-19. It was developed by the Kenya Medical Research Institute.

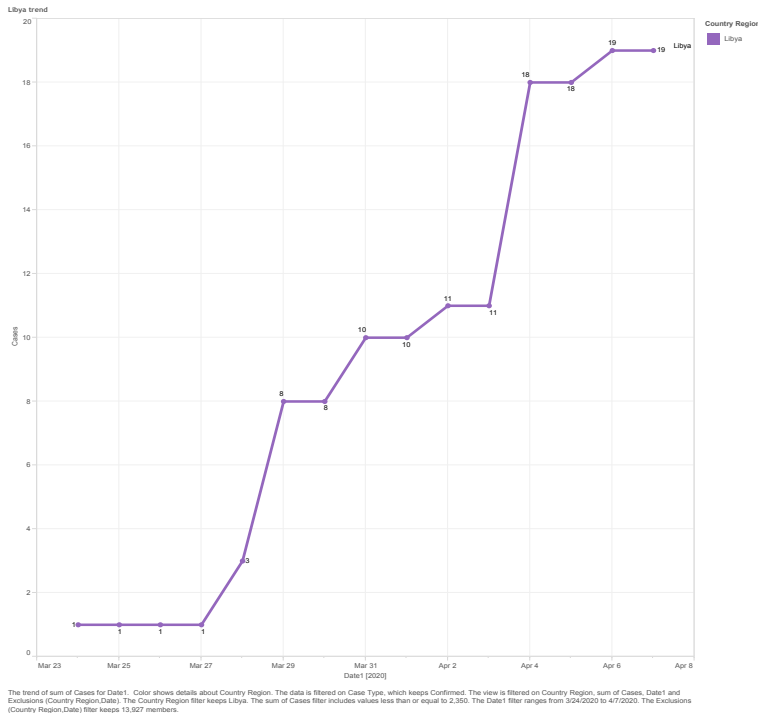
- Travel suspended for all persons coming into Kenya from any country with reported cases of Coronavirus.
- Kenya citizens and any foreigner with valid residence permit entering Kenya is required to self-quarantine or go to a government designated quarantine facility.
- Cessation of movement in and out of Nairobi, Mombasa, Kilifi and Kwale Counties from 6th April 2020 for 21 days.
- Suspension of international flights.

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Cashless transactions such as mobile money and credit cards are encouraged. Mobile operators and banks have been implored to take into consideration the situation and reduce the cost of transactions during this period.
- A 100-percent tax relief for low-income-earning persons.
- Reduced the top Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) rate from 30 percent to 25 percent.
- Appropriation of KES 10 billion through cash transfers to the vulnerable members of society.
- Temporary suspension of listing with Credit Reference Bureaux for persons who default on their loan obligations with effect from 1 April 2020.
- Disbursement of KES 1 billion for the recruitment of additional medical personnel.
- Disbursement of KES 1 billion for the recruitment of additional medical personnel.
- The reduction of the standard VAT rate from 16 percent to 14 percent (effective 1 April 2020.)
- A reduction of the resident corporate income tax from 30 percent to 25 percent.
- The emergency measures to be undertaken by the commercial banks include:
 - o Provision of relief to borrowers on their personal loans based on their individual circumstances arising from the pandemic. It is not immediately clear what "relief" it is intended the banks provide.
 - o Review of requests initiated by the borrower for extension of personal loans for periods of up to one year.
 - o Assessment and restructuring loans taken by corporate borrowers (and SMEs) based on their respective circumstances arising from the pandemic.
 - o Meeting all costs related to extension and restructuring of loans by the banks.
 - o Facilitating use of mobile digital platforms by waiving attendant charges for balance inquiry; and
 - o Eliminating all charges for transfer of money between mobile money wallets and bank accounts.

Other Support

- President established a Corona Virus Task Force as a national emergency response



Libya



Background

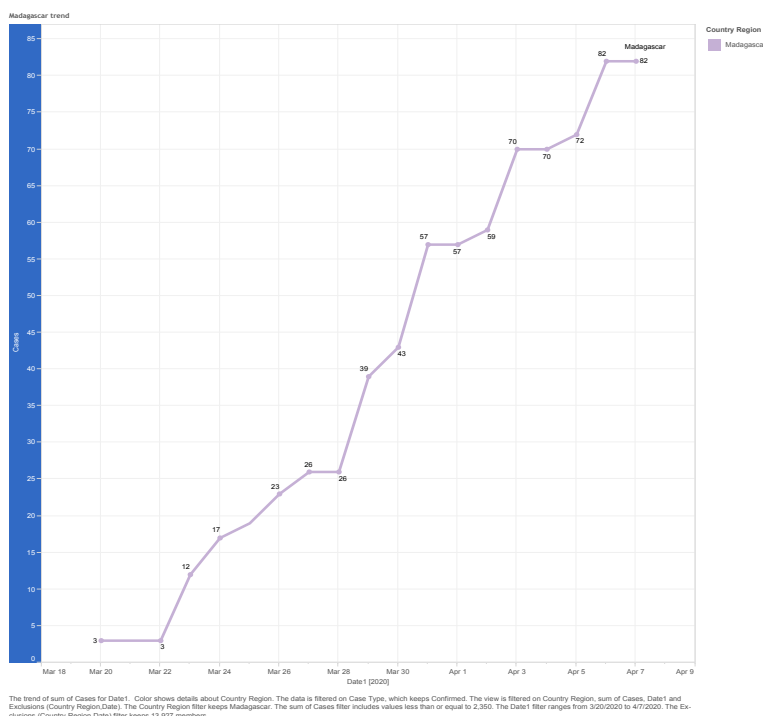
The first case of COVID-19 was reported in Libya on 3rd April 2020. As of 7th April, there were 19 confirmed cases

Preventive Measures put in Place

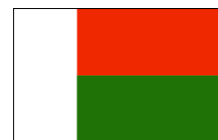
- Prayers in mosques cancelled, schools and universities closed for two weeks and public gatherings limited.
- Closure of all air, ground and maritime Libyan borders for a period of three weeks (with possible extension).
- Large public gatherings banned.
- 470 inmates from local and regional prisons freed to reduce the risk of infections.
- Suspension of all court proceedings until the end of April.
- The authorities in the Eastern region of the country have ordered a dusk-to-dawn curfew.

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Allocation of 500 million LYD for COVID-19 preparedness and response.



Madagascar



Background

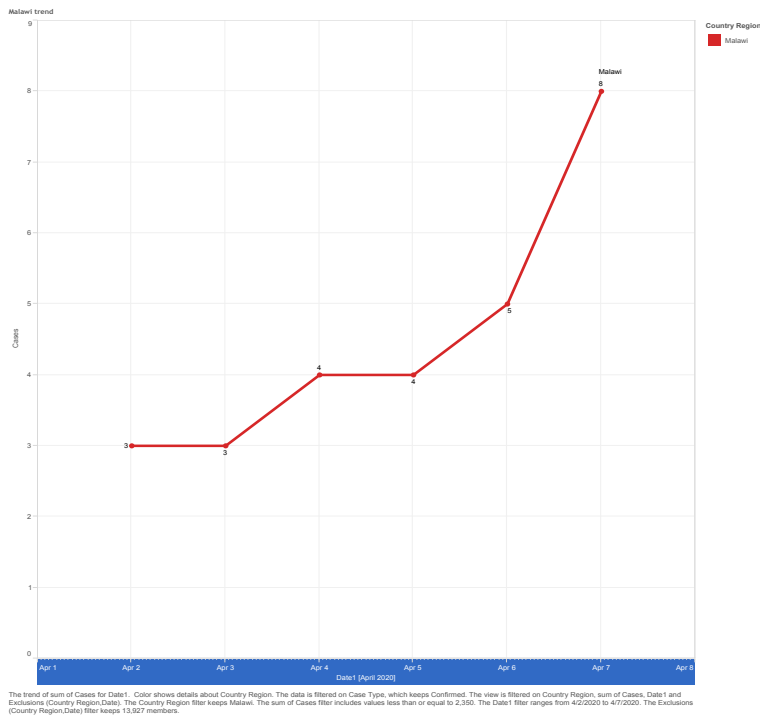
The first case of COVID-19 was detected in Madagascar on 20th March 2020. There were 82 confirmed cases as at 7th April, 2020

Preventive Measures put in Place

- Suspension of all international flights effective 20th March for 30 days
- Cruise ships not allowed in any port
- Suspension of all public transportation in the country effective 23rd March
- Closure of all schools and universities
- Imposition of a curfew from 2000hrs to 0500hrs from 23rd March. Only shops selling essential items remain open and opening hours restricted from 0600hrs to 1200hrs
- All public services are closed, except for health workers, the judiciary, public security, municipal sanitation and roadworks, telecommunications and the media
- Lockdown in Antananarivo and Toamasina effective 23rd March with only one person per household allowed to go shopping for essential items
- A complete ban on all public gatherings throughout the country effective 23rd March
- Public markets to open for only three days a week subject to strict Standard Operating Procedures
- All entertainment venues closed, and all sporting events suspended

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Price controls introduced by Government to regulate the prices of essential services and to prevent businessmen from taking advantage of the situation to hike prices
- Lockdown in Antananarivo and Toamasina not affecting transportation of goods



Malawi



Background

The first case of COVID-19 was detected in Malawi on 2nd April 2020. As of 7th April, there were 5 confirmed cases

Preventive Measures put in Place

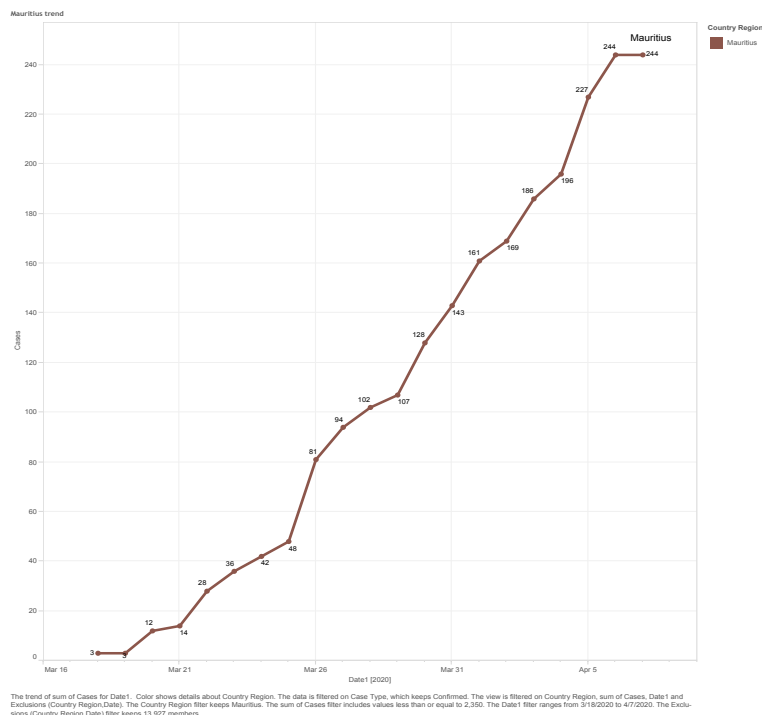
- Malawi declared a state of national disaster from 23rd March
- Closure of all schools, colleges and universities from 23rd March 2020 until further communication
- Recruitment of 2000 health workers to support the fight against COVID-19
- Postponement of a repeat Presidential Elections May to July 2020
- Restriction of all forms of public gatherings to less than 100 people
- Mandatory 14 days quarantine for all travellers from COVID-19 affected countries
- Suspension of all international flights as of 1st April until further notice apart from cargo flights

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Reduction of fuel prices to lower the transport costs
- Application of tax waivers on the importation of essential goods for Corona Virus management
- Reserve Bank of Malawi to allow banks to offer a three-month moratorium on interest payments on loans to small- and medium-sized businesses
- The country's Competition and Fair Trading Commission to put in place strict monitoring of price controls and punish anyone found increasing prices at the expense of Malawians
- The government to increase loans under the Malawi Enterprise Development Fund that will help micro, small and medium scale businesses that have been seriously affected by COVID-19
- Tobacco markets to remain open and allowed to operate without disruption to protect small farmers and bolster foreign currency receipts

Other Support

- Establishment of a relief fund through which well-wishers, companies can contribute to support the fight against COVID-19
- The President and all the ministers to take a 30% pay cut for three months in order to support the fight against COVID-19



Mauritius



Background

The first case of COVID-19 was detected in Mauritius on 18th March 2020. By 7th April, there were 244 confirmed cases

Preventive Measures put in Place

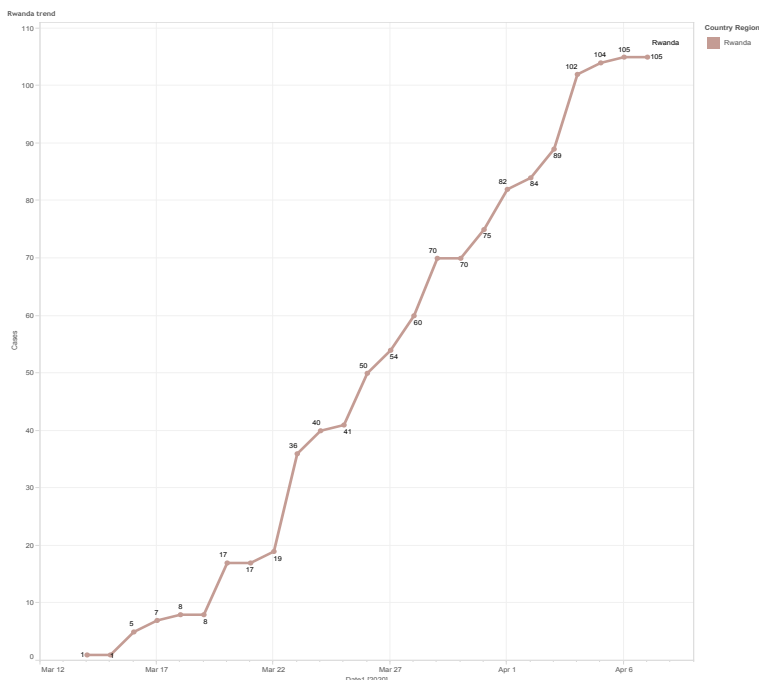
- Closure of borders and banning of commercial flights effective 19th March
- Closure of all schools and institutions of higher learning effective 23rd March until further communication
- A lockdown imposed for all non-essential services/travel from 23rd March to 15th April
- Mandatory wearing of face masks while out of home

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Introduction of a moratorium of 6 months on capital repayment for existing loans for enterprises that are being affected by COVID-19
- Provision of a special Relief Fund through commercial banks to meet cash flow and working capital requirements of economic operators which are being directly impacted by COVID-19
- Reduction of a cash reserve ratio applicable for commercial banks from 9% to 8%. This reduction is a key measure that aims at supporting banks to further assist businesses which are being directly impacted by COVID-19

Other Support

- Establishment of a special relief fund to support small scale enterprises
- A COVID-19 Solidarity Fund was put in place to support the population
- Reduced opening hours for shops selling essential goods and shopping by families restricted to twice a week for a maximum of 30 minutes each
- Provision of financial support to workers in the informal sector of 50% of the monthly minimum wage



Rwanda



Background

First COVID-19 case detected on March 8th, 2020 and by 7th April 2020 105 cases reported.

Preventive Measures put in Place

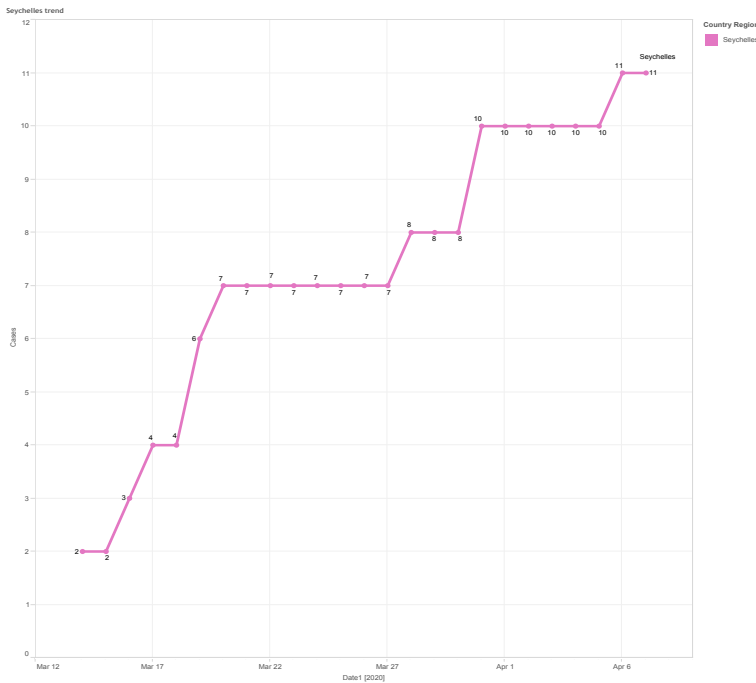
- A nation-wide lockdown announced on March 21, 2020.
- Citizens or foreigners returning to the country are subject to a 14-day mandatory quarantine at designated locations;
- Suspension of all commercial flights to and from the country except for cargo and essential services.
- Places of worship closed as well as educational institutions (schools and colleges), bars and restaurants.
- Social distancing to be observed.
- All borders closed except for goods and cargo services.
- Internal travel between districts and cities not authorized except for medical reasons or essential services.
- Social gatherings including weddings and sports events banned and non-essential movement outside homes not permitted.
- Shops and markets closed except for those selling food, medicine and other essential services.
- Contact-tracing for suspected infected persons conducted for further follow-up, testing, and treatment.
- Citizens urged to use mobile money and online banking whenever possible to limit the transfer of paper money and minimize person to person contacts

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- The Central Bank of Rwanda has provided a Rwf50 billion (\$54 million) facility and reduced the reserve requirement ratio for commercial banks from 5 per cent to 4 per cent to support the country's banking sector.
- The IMF emergency support under the Rapid Credit Facility has provided Rwanda with a \$109.4 million for COVID-19-related pressures on trade, tourism and foreign exchange reserves. The support will also provide much-needed resources for health expenditure and for households and firms affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

Other Support

- Government providing free food assistance to vulnerable people (poor, elderly, sick, and those paid on daily basis) for about 20,000 households in Kigali City.



Seychelles



Background

The first two coronavirus cases were reported on 14 March 2020. A total of 11 cases reported by 7 April 2020

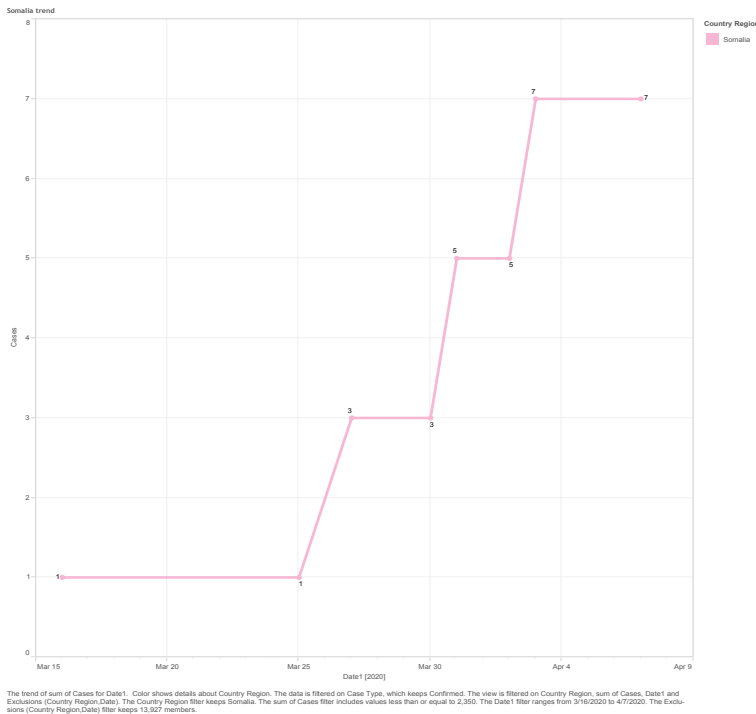
Preventive Measures put in Place

- Travel bans on visitors from high-risk regions
- Introduced social distancing
- Screening at ports of entry, and
- School closures.
- Temporary closure to cruise ships from 9 March 2020
- Ban on foreign yachts effected from 30th March.
- The closure of all schools and day care centres.
- A 30-day ban on foreign travel by Seychellois citizens from 30th March.
- Government guarantee for salaries of all private sector employees in April, May and June.
- Cancellation of flights to Mauritius, South Africa and India from 26 March to 30 April
- Beginning 30 March 2020, shops in Seychelles began closing at an earlier time (retail outlets closing from 6.30 pm to 6.30 am while food outlets such as takeaways and restaurants closing from 8 pm to 6.30 am) and new regulations limiting public gatherings to four people.
- On 6 April Government extended the closure of the Seychelles' international airport effective until end of April.
- Shutdown for 21 days starting midnight 8 April 2020. All outlets closed except for grocery stores and pharmaceuticals

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

On 20 March 2020, Government announced:

- Reduction of loan repayments for six months.
- Postponement of tax payments due in March until September.
- Through the Central Bank of Seychelles (CBS):
 - o Reduced the policy rate by 100 bps to 4 percent on March 23.
 - o Provided a credit facility of approximately \$36 million to assist commercial banks with emergency relief measures to assist businesses and individuals struggling with the financial impact of the pandemic.
 - o Provided a limited credit to government up to SCR 500 million
 - o Extended the maturity of credit to commercial banks to 3 years.



Somalia



Background

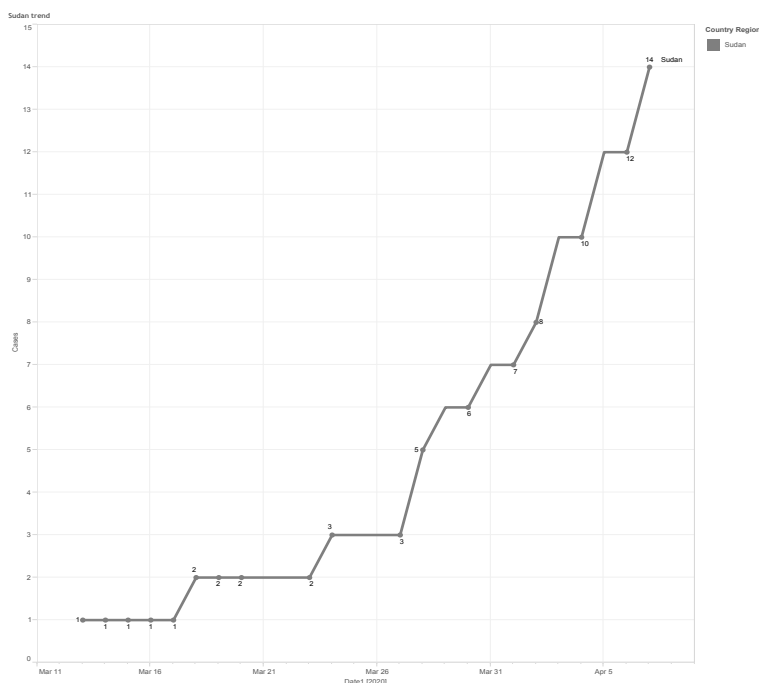
First case detected on 16th March 2020 and by 7th April 2020 seven cases were reported.

Preventive Measures put in Place

- All educational institutions both private and public closed.
- Large gatherings prohibited and public meetings banned.
- International and domestic commercial flights suspended with exceptions for humanitarian flights.
- National health institutions -assisted by WHO - to conduct case findings and contact tracing, testing and treatment, and quarantine activities.
- A toll-free number 449 set up for the public to seek advice and report suspected cases of COVID-19 across the country.

Other Support

- UN agencies and other development agencies have partnered with the Government to set up the integrated Country Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP) to address the humanitarian consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Plan is focused on scaling up specific COVID-19 activities that will reinforce healthcare and humanitarian services such as food distribution and provision of medical supplies.



Sudan



Background

The first coronavirus case was confirmed on 13 March 2020. A total of 14 cases reported by 7 April 2020.

Preventive Measures put in Place

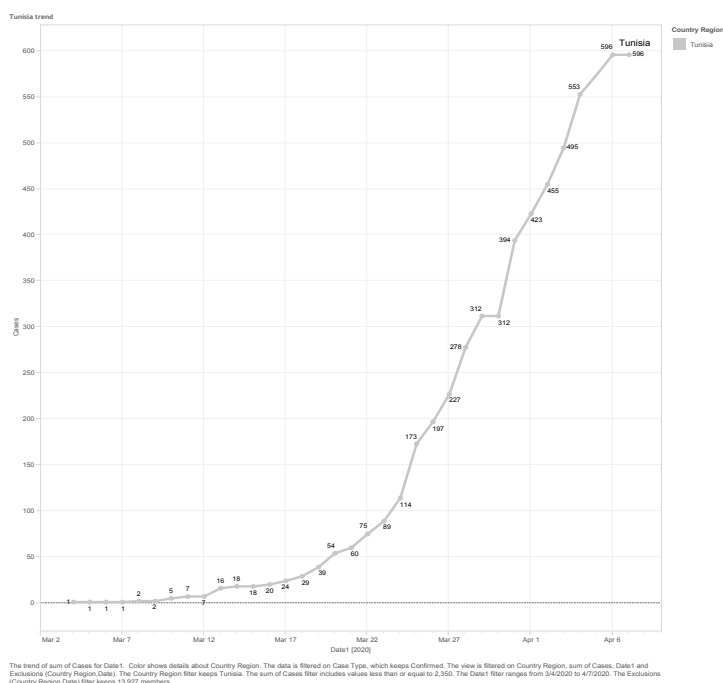
- Suspension of Visa issuance and flight services from 12 March to 23 April to eight countries listed by the WHO as being majorly affected that included Korea, China, Italy, Iran, France, Spain, Japan, and Egypt.
- Closure of three border crossing points with Egypt, dispatch of medical teams and security forces to the border areas with Egypt and halting bus trips to Egypt.
- Ban on political and social events or gatherings beginning 14 March, including the postponement of the National Economic Conference, scheduled for 29-31 March.
- Closure of schools, universities, religious institutes, colleges and higher institutes for one month beginning 14 March.
- Postponement of basic certification exams in all States until further notice.
- Beginning 14 March, measures introduced to shorten the time worshipers spent in mosques to avoid crowding.
- Declaration of a state of health emergency on 16 March leading to a shutdown of all ports of entry.
- Establishment of a national COVID-19 response plan with a budget of \$82 million.
- Temporary opening of Khartoum Airport and Port Sudan Seaport from 19 to 20 March and the border with Chad from 20 to 21 March that allowed 413 Sudanese to return back home with a requirement to produce an international clearance certificate on Coronavirus.
- Introduction of one-month mandatory self-quarantine beginning 19 March 2020 for Sudanese arriving from abroad.
- Establishment of a National Fund to collect donations to combat the pandemic.
- Introduction of a curfew in the whole country from 24 March 2020 (08:00 pm until 06:00 am) until

further notice. From 31 March, the hours of the mandatory nationwide curfew extended to 12 hours between 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

- A total of 4,217 prisoners released on 25 March from al-Hoda prison in the city of Omdurman.
- Halt to inter-city and long-haul bus travels beginning 26 March (from 6 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.).

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Ban on maize exports from 15 March until further notice.



Tunisia



Background

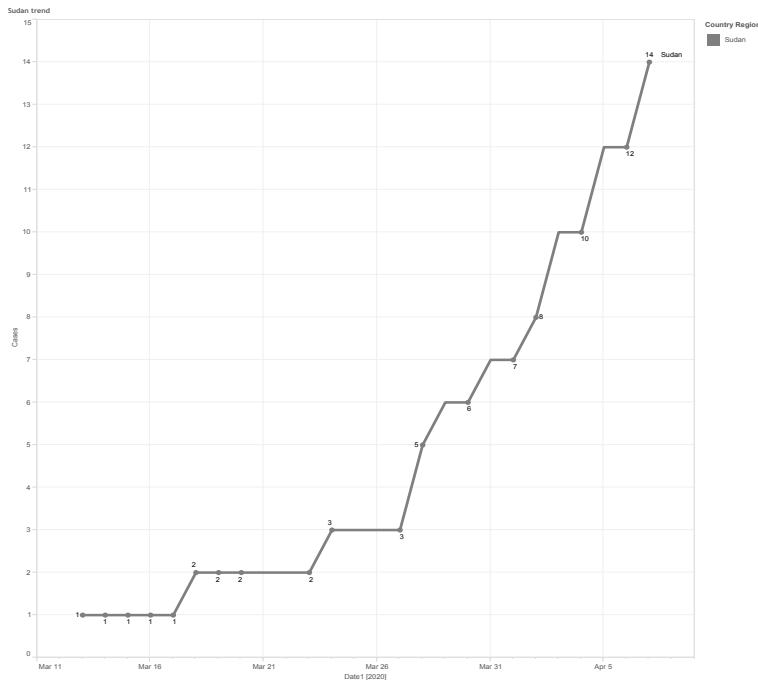
The first case of COVID-19 was reported in Tunisia on 2nd March 2020. As of 7th April, there were 596 confirmed cases

Preventive Measures put in Place

- Suspension of flights and closure of maritime borders
- Restriction of internal movements and imposition of a curfew from 6 pm to 6 am.
- Closure of factories, offices, hotels and restaurants
- Total lockdown – use of robots (Robocop) to enforce the lockdown.
- Cancellation of cultural and sports events and scientific conferences
- Closure of cafes, bars and restaurants as of 04:00 p.m.
- Closure of schools, universities and other educational institutions.
- Expansion of the budget allocation for health expenses as well as the creation of a 100 Tunisian dinars (TND) Million fund for the acquisition of equipment for public hospitals.
- 150 TND allocated for cash transfers for low income households, disabled and homeless people.
- 300 TND million allocated to support those on temporary unemployment owing to COVID19.

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- A 2.5 billion TND emergency plan (\$0.71 billion or 1.8 percent of GDP) was announced on March 21.
- Creation of investment funds (600 million TND).
- Established a state guarantee for new credits (500 million TND)
- The government will delay tax debts, postpone taxes on small- and medium-sized businesses, delay repayment of low-income employee loans and provide financial assistance to poor families.
- Provided banks with the necessary liquidity to enable them to continue normal operations.
- Carry over of credits (principle and interest) due during the period from 1st March until the end of September 2020. These measures granted to customers classified 0 and 1
- Establishment of a fund of 2.5 billion Tunisian dinars (\$860 million) to support businesses
- Lowering of the interest rate to 6.75%.
- Delaying the payment of instalments on loans and dropping charges for cash withdrawals from ATMs.
- Banks have removed withdrawal charges and offering e-banking subscriptions



Uganda



Background

The first case of COVID-19 was detected in Uganda on 21st March 2020. By 7th April, there were 52 confirmed cases

Preventive Measures put in Place

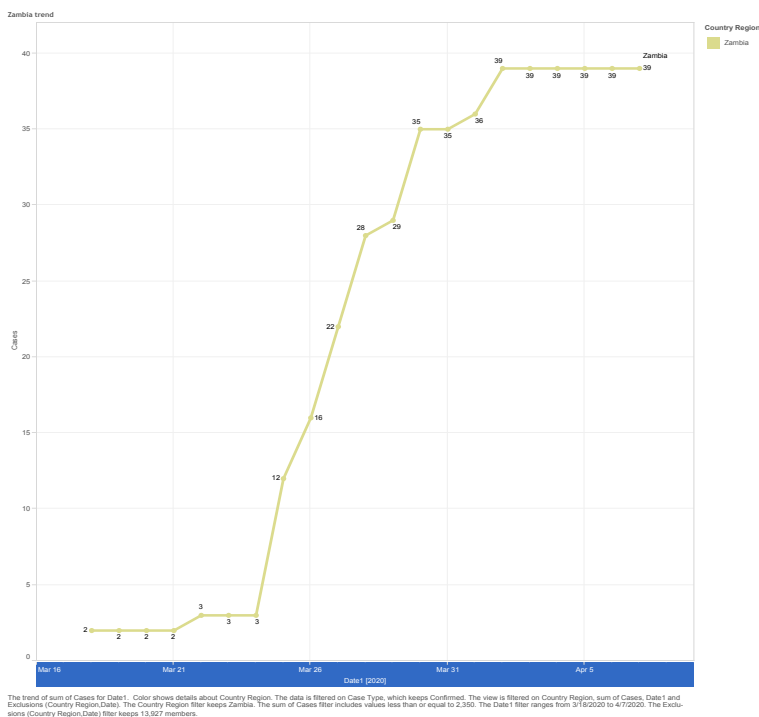
- Closure of all schools and educational institutions of higher learning for 30 days effective 20th March 2020
- Suspension of religious gatherings including Friday prayers in mosques, Sunday church services for 30 days effective 18th March 2020
- Banning all international flights and closing all borders including land, sea for a period of 21 days effective 22nd March 2020
- All incoming travellers quarantined at designated facilities for 14 days
- Suspension of political and cultural public meetings, rallies, conferences, by-elections
- Public gatherings limited to a maximum of 5 persons
- Banning all public and private transport except those transporting cargo and carrying out services deemed essential for 14 days effective 30th March 2020
- Operation at all shopping malls, arcades and shops suspend for 14 days effective 30th March. Those selling food items and supermarkets exempted but must strictly adhere to SOPs
- Daily curfew starting from 1900hrs to 0600hrs for 14 days effective 30th March 2020
- Civil servants to stay and work from home

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Closure of all schools and educational institutions of higher learning for 30 days effective 20th March 2020
- Suspension of religious gatherings including Friday prayers in mosques, Sunday church services for 30 days effective 18th March 2020
- Banning all international flights and closing all borders including land, sea for a period of 21 days effective 22nd March 2020
- All incoming travellers quarantined at designated facilities for 14 days
- Suspension of political and cultural public meetings, rallies, conferences, by-elections
- Public gatherings limited to a maximum of 5 persons
- Banning all public and private transport except those transporting cargo and carrying out services deemed essential for 14 days effective 30th March 2020
- Operationa at all shopping malls, arcades and shops suspend for 14 days effective 30th March. Those selling food items and supermarkets exempted but must strictly adhere to SOPs
- Daily curfew starting from 1900hrs to 0600hrs for 14 days effective 30th March 2020
- Civil servants to stay and work from home

Other Support

- A National Task Force on COVID-19 headed by the Prime Minister established
- Relief food distribution to the most vulnerable targeting at least 1.5M urban poor
- The Government launched a fundraising drive to seek emergency funds to support COVID-19 response. The fund has received donations from individuals and corporations



Zambia



Background

First case detected on 18th March 2020 and by 7th April 2020 a total of 39 cases reported

Preventive Measures put in Place

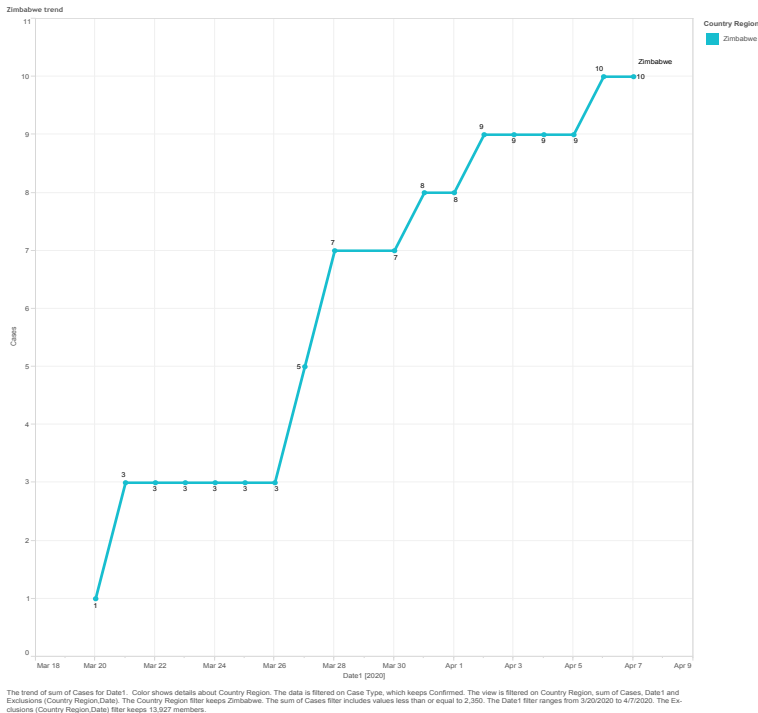
- Suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 are subject to mandatory isolation at a Government of Zambia-designated health facility.
- All travelers arriving in Zambia from any country with confirmed COVID-19 cases are required to self-quarantine for a minimum of 14 days, and to inform Zambian health officials if they develop symptoms.
- Health screening conducted at all entry points.
- International flights in Ndola, Livingstone and Mfuwe suspended until further notice. The Kenneth Kaunda International Airport in the capital Lusaka remains open until further notice.
- Conferences, meetings and workshops involving large groups of people banned;
- Schools, universities and other educational institutions closed till further notice.
- Restaurants to operate only on take-away and delivery basis while all bars, nightclubs, cinemas, gyms and casinos closed.
- Police to restrict numbers of people visiting inmates and suspects in police detention.
- Prison authorities to ensure detention facilities are not overcrowded.
- Social distancing of at least one to two meters to be observed.
- Social gatherings banned.

Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Truck drivers are allowed entry at border points, tested and kept under mandatory quarantine centers if they are originating from high risk countries. In addition, all truck drivers have their records kept for further follow up and monitoring.
- To support easing of liquidity, Government to release Kwacha 2.5 billion (app. US\$140 Mill) to reduce arrears owed to domestic supplies of goods and services, pay outstanding arrears of pensioners and retirees.
- Kwacha 140 million (app. US\$7.8 Million) to be paid to local contractors in the road sector.
- Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) to suspend excise duty on imported ethanol-based sanitizers and other medicine-related activities subject to guidelines to be issued.
- VAT payments on imported spare-parts, lubricants, and stationery to be removed to ease pressure on companies.
- Suspension of import duties on the importation of concentrates in the mining sector to ease pressure on the sector.
- Suspension of Export Duty on precious metals and crocodile skins.
- Through the Bank of Zambia, the Government has put in place measures to encourage the use of digital financial services to minimize use of cash money and minimize person to person contacts in conducting financial transactions by:
 - o waiving charges for person to person electronic money transfers of up to Kwacha 150: these transactions are thus to be free of charge.
 - o Removing the transaction and balance limits on agents and corporate wallets.
 - o Reducing the processing fees for Real Time Gross Settlement System.

Other Support

- Ministry of Health has set up the Epidemic Preparedness Fund amounting to Kwacha 57 million (app. US\$3.17 million).
- Cabinet approved a COVID-19 Contingency and Response Plan with a Budget of 659 million Kwacha (app. US\$36.6 million) under the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit



Zimbabwe



Background

The first coronavirus case was confirmed on 20 March 2020. A total of 10 cases reported as of 7 April 2020.

Preventive Measures put in Place

- State of National Disaster declared on 17 March 2020
- Launched a COVID-19 National Preparedness and Response Plan on 19 March 2020: Measures implemented include:
 - o Suspension of gatherings of more than 50 people
 - o Suspension of prayers at churches and mosques
 - o Closure of all schools, colleges and universities indefinitely
 - o Cancellation of political meetings and major events like the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF)
 - o Reduction of employee attendance at government and private workplaces (except for critical staff).
- Gazette Public Health (Covid-19 Prevention, Containment and Treatment) Regulations 2020 on 23 March to allow for compulsory testing
- Authorities provided over Zimbabwe Dollars 100 million and US\$2 million to fight against COVID-19.
- Government reported to have made cash transfers for one million vulnerable households
- Government lifted freeze on hiring for the health sector and set a target to recruit 200 additional medical personnel (5 percent increase)
- A 21-day nationwide lockdown from 30 March.

- Authorization to companies to extend the payment of corporate taxes (waiving interest and penalties)
- Suspension of duties and taxes on various goods and services related to COVID-19, including on testing, protection, sterilization, and other medical consumables.
- Relaxation of some procurement regulations with a view of facilitating speedy procurement of essential goods and services.
- Return of the multicurrency system allowing both Zimbabwean dollar and US dollar as legal tender.
- Reduction in bank policy rate from 35 percent to 25 percent.
- Reduction of the statutory reserve ratio on bank deposits from 5 percent to 4.5 percent.
- Increase of the private sector lending facility by the Central Bank from ZW\$1 billion to ZW\$2.5 billion.
- Movement from managed floating exchange rate system to a fixed exchange rate management system.



COMESA SECRETARIAT
COMESA Center
Ben Bella Road
P.O. Box 30051. Lusaka, Zambia



+260 211 229 725



www.comesa.int



info@comesa.int



facebook.com/COMESA/



[@twitter.com/comesa_lusaka](https://twitter.com/comesa_lusaka)