

Common Market for
Eastern and Southern Africa



COVID-19

in **COMESA**

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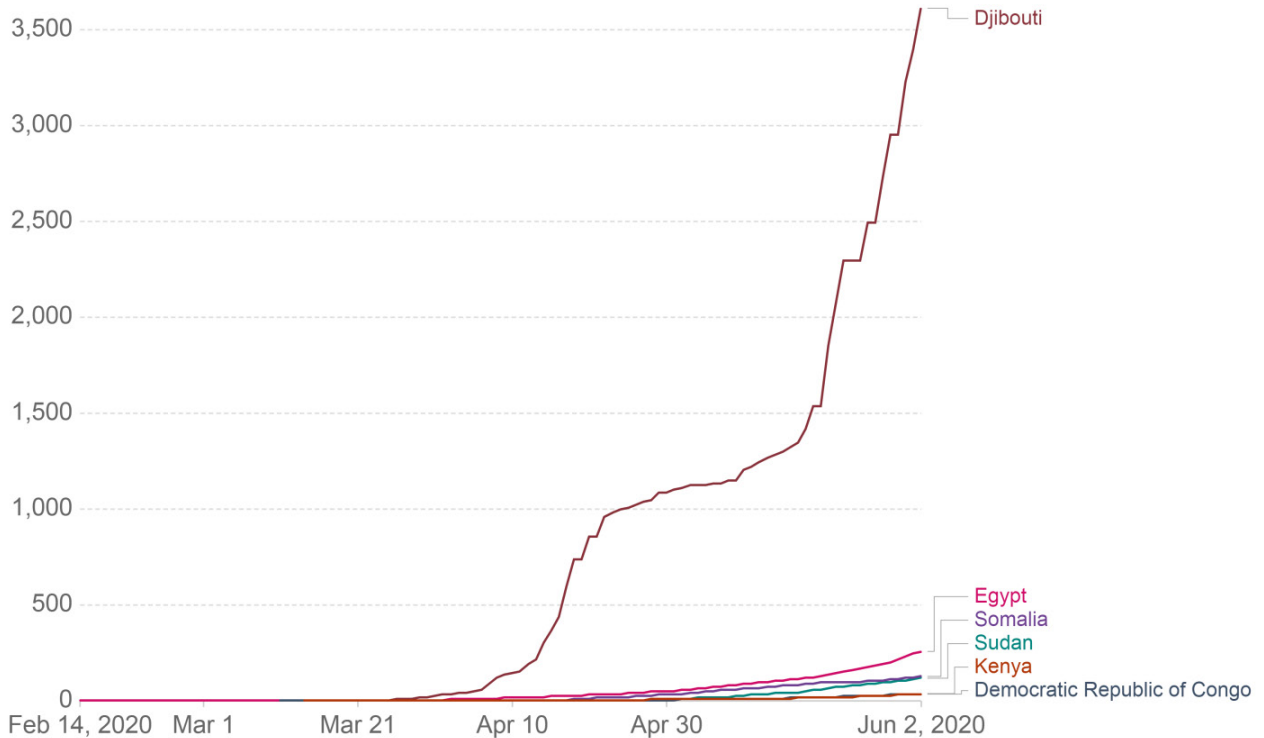
COVID-19 Infection Rate in the COMESA Region Stands at Nine Persons Per Million

Since the first case was recorded in the region in February 2019, Member States responded by putting in place various preventive measures to curb the spread of the pandemic. However, the region in general, and some countries have continued to record increases in the number of new cases. To date, the COMESA region with an estimated population of 560 million people (as per the 2018 COMWARN data) has recorded a total of 49,172 cases. While the number of the total cases may seem high, the regional infection rate per million population stands at nine.

The countries in the region that have to date recorded high numbers include, Egypt (26,384), Sudan (5,173), Djibouti (3,569), DR Congo (3,326), Somalia (2,023) and Kenya (2,021). Despite leading in the total numbers of recorded cases in the region, Egypt prevalence rate per million population is 258. Djibouti, on the other hand, has the highest rate per million at 3,617 relative to its population size, which is around one million. Comparatively, Sudan, DR Congo, Somalia and Kenya have low infection rates per million population as summarized in the graph below and the Summary of Regional Figures.

Total confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people

The number of confirmed cases is lower than the number of total cases. The main reason for this is limited testing.



Source: European CDC – Situation Update Worldwide – Last updated 2nd June, 11:45 (London time) [OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus](https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus) • CC BY

On a positive note, the high prevalence rate in Djibouti indicates that the country has conducted more testing for COVID-19. A regional comparative analysis indicates that to date, Djibouti has conducted a total of 28,638 tests second to Mauritius with 94,650.

A high prevalence rate of infection on the health system has the following impacts:

- a. Strain on the health system as efforts are put in place to address cases at the expense of other illnesses; and
- b. Infections continue increasing if preventive measures are not adhered to by the population.

Reasons for Increase of Cases In Some Member States

The trend in the last few weeks indicates that Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti, DR Congo and Kenya have continued to record high numbers of new cases despite the various preventive measures put in place to contain the spread of the pandemic. As is the case in Djibouti, the high number of cases in these countries can be attributed to increased mass testing. On the other hand, in addition to the increased levels of testing undertaken in respective Member States, the number of new cases has also been associated with some cultural and behavioral practices such as::

- a. Lack of adherence to health guidelines and other restrictive measures;
- b. Lack of awareness and misinformation;
- c. Failure to seek medication and associated stigma;
- d. Limited access to testing and treatment facilities;
- e. Inadequate access to water and other sanitation facilities;
- f. Unrestricted communal lifestyle which makes it difficult to observe social distancing; and
- g. Weak health care systems affected by many years of conflict and insecurity as is the case in DR Congo.

Summary of Regional Figures

Country	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Tests	Tests/1M pop	Tot Cases/1M pop	Deaths	Deaths/1M pop	Total Recovered	Total Active Cases
Burundi	63	21	284	24	5	1	0.08	33	29
Comoros	106	19	-	-	122	2	2	26	78
Djibouti	3,569	1,101	28,260	28,638	3,617	24	24	1,521	2024
DR Congo	3,326	923	-	-	37	72	0.8	482	2,772
Egypt	26,384	8,417	135,000	1,321	258	1,005	10	6,447	18,932
Eritrea	39	0	-	-	11	-	-	39	0
Eswatini	293	37	4994	4,308	253	3	3	194	96
Ethiopia	1,257	556	112,377	980	11	12	0.1	217	1,028
Kenya	2,021	735	80,054	1,492	38	69	1	482	1,470
Libya	168	93	6,206	904	24	5	0.7	52	111
Madagascar	826	240	10,249	371	30	6	0.2	174	646
Malawi	336	235	5,049	265	18	4	0.2	42	290
Mauritius	335	1	120,358	94,650	263	10	8	322	3
Rwanda	377	41	66,976	5,183	29	1	0.08	262	114
Seychelles	11	0	-	-	112	-	-	11	0
Somalia	2,023	334	-	-	128	79	5	361	1,583
Sudan	5,173	1,197	401	9	118	298	7	1,522	3,353
Tunisia	1,084	33	52,503	4,446	92	48	4	964	72
Uganda	489	267	96,825	2,123	11	-	-	79	410
Zambia	1,089	169	28,236	1,540	59	7	0.4	912	170
Zimbabwe	203	147	46,613	3,140	14	4	0.3	29	170
TOTALS	49,172	14,566	794,101			1,650		14,171	33,351

Source: World Health Organization, Worldometer, Johns Hopkins University (compiled by COMWARN)



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