

Common Market for
Eastern and Southern Africa



Stringent COVID-19 Response Measures Paying-off

COVID-19

in **COMESA**

Situational Update N° 19

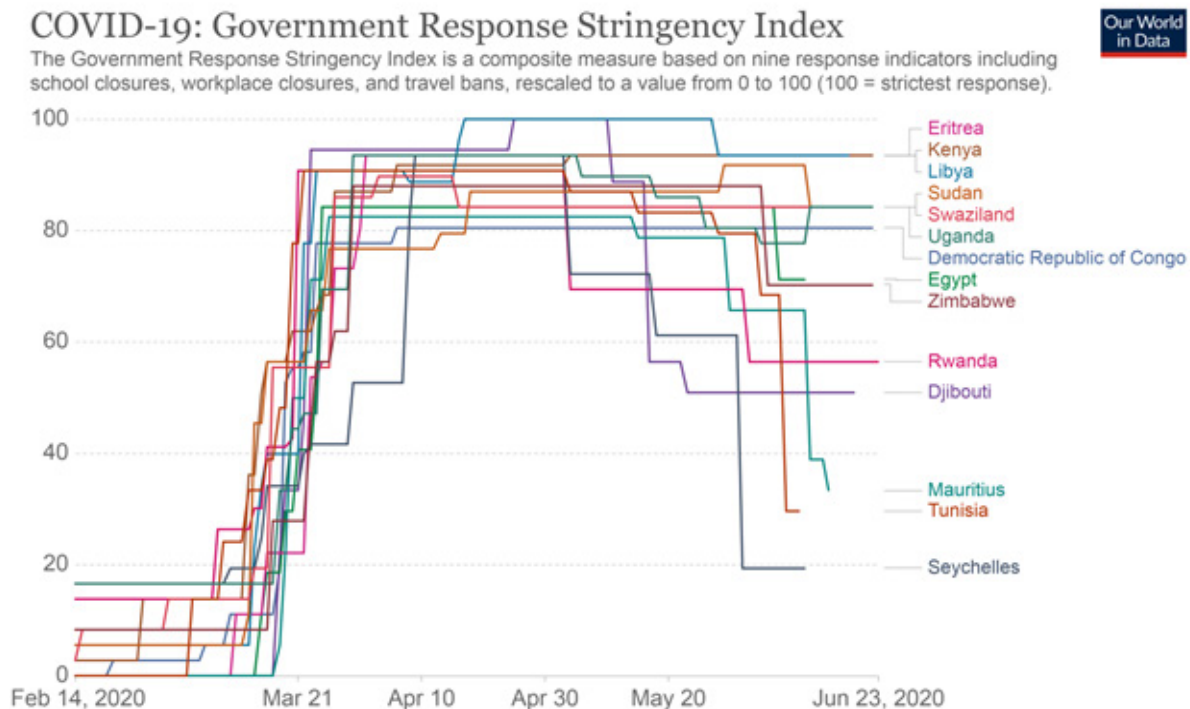
24th June 2020



Stringent COVID-19 Response Measures Paying-off

With the onset of COVID-19 in the region, countries in the region responded in three ways: those that put in place restrictive measures to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19, those that adopted moderate restrictions, and those that opted to assess the situation first before taking response decisions. Countries that enforced strict measures from the onset included Djibouti, DR Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Kenya, Libya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Some of the strict measures put in place included, curfews, cessation of movements within and outside major urban centres. The moderate measures comprised of closure of schools, places of worship and entertainment establishments (bars, casinos, clubs).



Source: Hale, Webster, Petherick, Phillips, and Kira (2020). Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker – Last Updated 23rd June.

Note: This index simply records the number and strictness of government policies, and should not be interpreted as 'scoring' the appropriateness or effectiveness of a country's response.

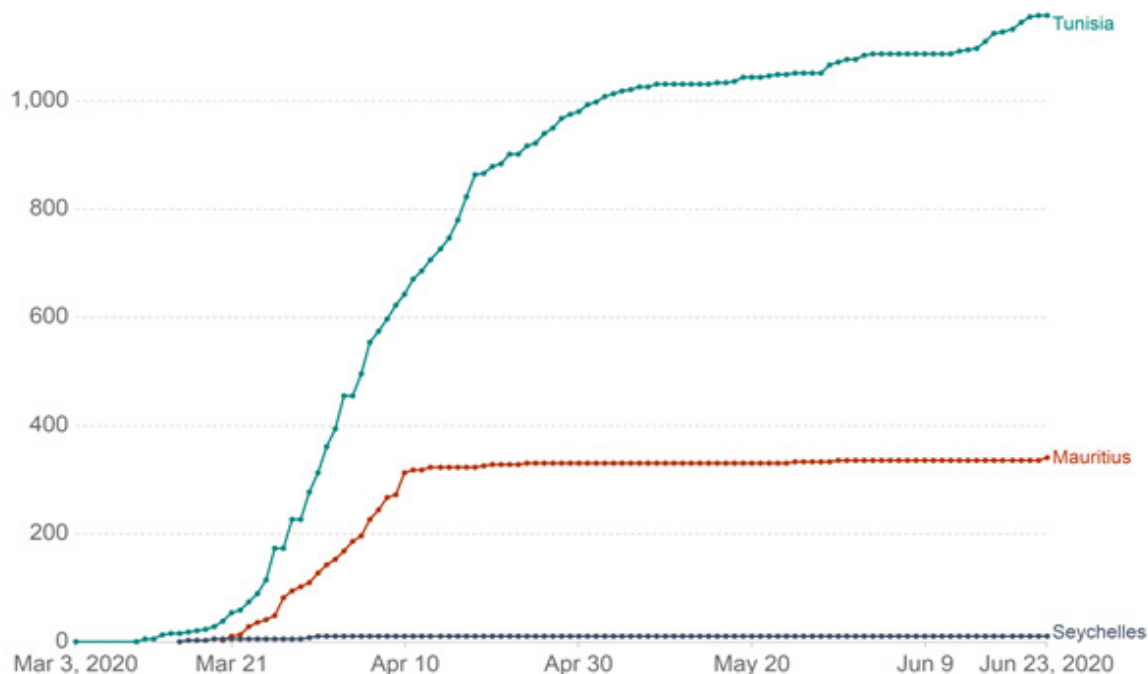
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Effects of Stringent Response Measures

An analysis of the stringent measures put in place in some Member States shows they have contributed to the reduction of the spread of the pandemic. This is evident in Mauritius, Seychelles and Tunisia. In those countries, collective interest and responsibility raised national consciousness on the critical need for everyone to adhere to the measures to contain the pandemic. The efforts in these three countries were also strengthened by mass testing, tracing and treatment. This explains the flattening of the COVID-19 curves in the three countries as shown in the graph below.

Total confirmed COVID-19 cases

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 23rd June, 11:20 (London time) OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus • CC BY

Mauritius, Seychelles and Tunisia have also had high rates of COVID-19 recoveries, that is 95.88%, 100% and 88.01%, respectively, leading to the drastic reduction of active cases. Three countries have now started lifting some of the strict measures. Seychelles has opened the tourism sector and is allowing chartered flights to bring in tourists. Tunisia has removed the curfews and is opening industrial complexes while Mauritius is set to open institutions of learning in July.

However, some measures critical for containing the spread of the pandemic such as restrictions on big gatherings, sports events, social distancing, maintaining basic hygiene, among others, have been maintained.

Lessons learned

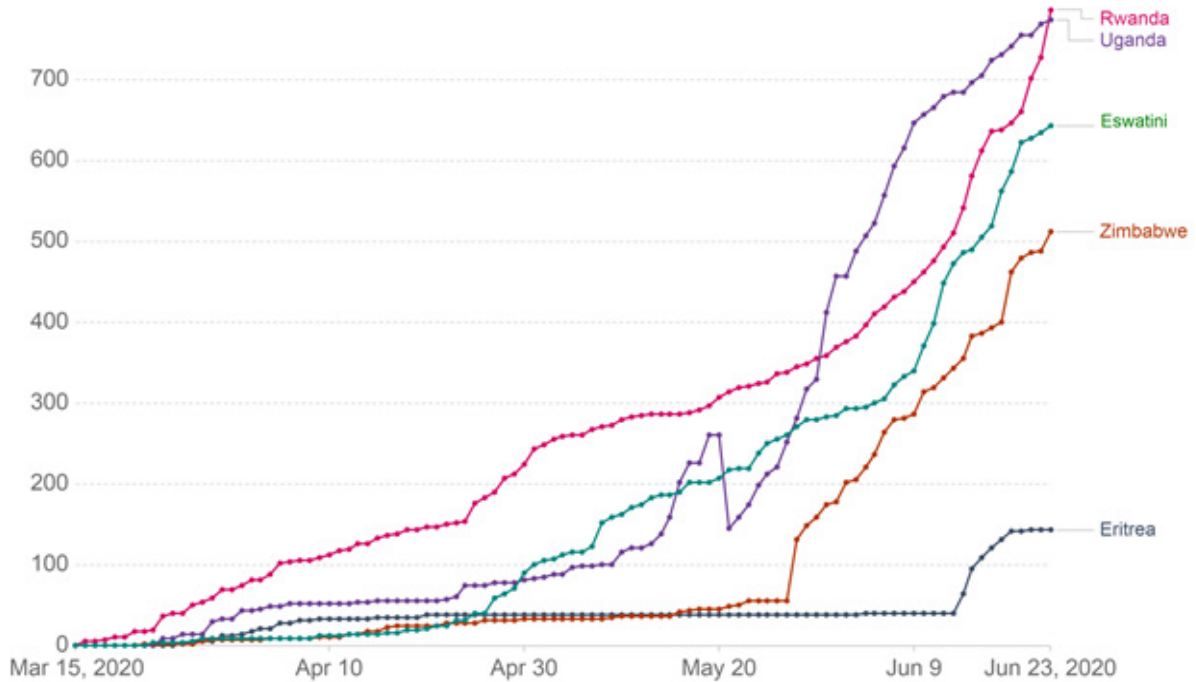
Some of the lessons that can be drawn from the three countries in containing the pandemic are:

- Multi-agency coordination is key among stakeholders
- Regular reviews of the situation and putting in place the necessary adjustments
- Provision of sufficient equipment and other resources, including human and financial is critical
- Effective utilization of funds allocated to strengthen efforts towards containing the pandemic
- Strict implementation of the preventive measures
- Effective testing, tracing and treatment
- Awareness creation among the population

As shown in the table below, the continued enforcement of strict measures in Eritrea with 104 total active cases, Eswatini (348), Rwanda (425), Uganda (98) and Zimbabwe (455) has contributed to the containment of the spread of COVID-19. The curfews, for example, have been critical in constraining movements and gatherings thus reducing the spread of the virus in both the urban and rural areas.

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Source: European CDC – Situation Update Worldwide – Last updated 23rd June, 11:20 (London time) OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus • CC BY

Summary of regional figures

Country	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Tests	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Tests/ 1M pop	Total Deaths	Deaths/ 1M pop	Total Re-covered	Recovery Rate	Total Active Cases
Burundi	144	0	382	12	32	1	0.08	93	64.58%	50
Comoros	265	18	-	305	-	7	8	159	60.00%	99
Djibouti	4,617	18	45,213	4,675	45,778	49	50	3,989	86.40%	579
DR Congo	6,027	103	-	67	-	135	2	861	14.29%	5,031
Egypt	58,141	1,332	135,000	568	1,320	2,365	23	15,535	26.72%	40,241
Eritrea	143	0	-	40	-	0	-	39	27.27%	104
Eswatini	674	31	6,551	581	5,648	7	6	319	47.33%	348
Ethiopia	4,848	185	223,341	42	1,944	75	0.7	1,412	29.13%	3,361
Kenya	4,952	155	146,537	92	2,727	128	2	1,782	35.99%	3,042
Libya	639	44	20,757	93	3,022	17	2	132	20.66%	490
Madagascar	1,724	84	19,027	62	688	15	0.5	732	42.46%	977
Malawi	803	0	11,536	42	603	11	0.6	258	32.13%	534
Mauritius	340	0	164,182	267	129,101	10	8	326	95.88%	4
Rwanda	798	11	118,112	62	9,126	2	0.2	371	46.49%	425
Seychelles	11	0	-	112	-	0	-	11	100.00%	0
Somalia	2,835	23	-	179	-	90	6	829	29.24%	1,916
Sudan	8,889	191	401	203	9	548	13	3,699	41.61%	4,642
Tunisia	1,159	0	67,456	98	5,709	50	4	1,023	88.27%	86
Uganda	797	0	170,789	17	3,738	0	-	699	87.70%	98
Zambia	1,477	47	50,771	80	2,764	18	1	1,213	82.13%	246
Zimbabwe	525	13	53,283	35	3,586	6	0.4	64	12.19%	455
TOTALS	99,283	2,242	1,233,338			3,534		33,546	23,357	62,728

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



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