

Woolworths expects 9.7% rise in full-year sales

By [Ngobile Dladla](#)

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Woolworths Holdings said on Monday group sales for the 52 weeks ended 27 June were expected to rise by 9.7% as trading across the group continued to recover from the impact of Covid-19 restrictions.



A man walks past an outlet of retailer Woolworths in Cape Town, South Africa. Reuters/Mike Hutchings/File Photo

Retailers across the world were among the worst affected by the pandemic, forced to close stores or not sell certain items like alcohol, while demand for formal attire also declined.

As lockdown restrictions ease, sales are starting to improve although consumer confidence in South Africa remains weak.

Food business

Woolworths said its South African food business, which accounts for just under half of total revenue, grew in terms of both market share and volume, with sales up by 6.9% compared to the prior year period. Comparable store sales rose 5.7%.

While customers have partly reverted to pre-pandemic shopping habits, frozen foods and groceries continue to deliver strong growth, the retailer added.

Fashion, beauty and home

Sales at the fashion, beauty and home business were still constrained by lower demand for formal wear, the company said, as well as its moves to reduce shop floor space and simplify its private-label offerings.

Revenue in this segment, which contributes just over 16% of the total, rose by 3.5%, driven by a strong second half.



SA's big retail chains race to restock looted stores

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In Australia and New Zealand, upmarket department chain David Jones and clothing chain Country Road posted sales growth of 2.3% and 13.4% respectively. The two contribute a combined 36% of group revenue.

The retailer said 11 of its South African stores – nine in KwaZulu Natal province and two in Gauteng – had been looted and severely damaged during the country's worst unrest in years.

"Trading (in affected stores) will be dependent on the resumption of supply, logistics, and operational activities at these stores," it added.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Reporting by Nqobile Dlodla; editing by Pronit Mukherjee, Kirsten Donovan

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