

Secure parking and rest areas play an essential role in promoting safety conditions along corridors. This kind of facilities allow both travellers and long distance drivers to have breaks at appropriate intervals and fulfil basic needs of road users, such as rest stops, refuelling, restrooms and refreshment. Accordingly, they make long-distance and international transit trips more viable, which otherwise would be inconvenient and difficult, if not infeasible. Hence, they also contribute to trade and transport facilitation along road corridors.

Apart from offering a safe place to park, especially for the night, Road Side Stations (RSS), include restaurants, shops, comfort facilities, caretaker's quarters, mechanical repair and collateral services. These structures, which are very common in Europe, United States and Japan, have been implemented or are in course of implementation on many African corridors.

An example is the [Northern Corridor](#) linking the Kenyan seaport of Mombasa to the landlocked Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Democratic Republic of Congo. Here, different models of RSS have been designed and planned for implementation, many of them already completed, whose [size](#) varies according to the number of amenities they include and [regional guidelines](#) have been adopted to guide their development.

Based on the “michinoeki” model adopted in Japan, i.e. multi-functional road side facilities that offer a wide range of services such as rest space for drivers and passengers (e.g. hotels, restaurants, recreation); information space (ICT services, banking, money transfer, etc.); specialized services (medical, wellness, counselling, training, safety education, etc.), they are being implemented along other key African corridors, such as the [Nacala Corridor](#), in Mozambique.

In addition to the above services, the main characteristic of michinoeki is that they include an open market space that allows local communities to engage in trade activities, and therefore they play an important role in promoting the socio-economic development and income generation for communities living along corridors (e.g. rural farmers and local population).

In 2006, the World Bank developed specific [guidelines](#) on roadside stations based on the michinoeki model that describe modalities for their design and development.

