

# Umodzi Park makes strides in Malawian hospitality industry

Since its official opening in 2015, Umodzi Park has become an international entertainment and events hub in the heart of Lilongwe, making a series of valuable contributions to the development of the Malawian hospitality industry. Celebrating two years of hospitality success, this five-star hotel and conferencing destination continue to make strides in Malawian tourism and the economy at large.

“We’ve experienced tremendous growth in the past two years, and the hotel has become one of the country’s main attractions for business and leisure travellers alike. Thanks to the resort’s world-class venues and facilities, Lilongwe now has the appropriate facilities to host highly successful events on a national and international scale,” says Derick van der Nest, Umodzi Park’s general manager.

An estimated 207,000 people visited the complex in 2016, including 1,219 VIPs. Some of the notable VIPs who visited Umodzi Park include the president of Zambia, Edgar Lungu, Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi, former Tanzanian president Jakaya Kikwete, and President of World Bank, Makhtar Diop.

## Conference venues and facilities

The resort’s Bingu Wa Mutharika International Convention Centre (BICC) boasts conference venues and convention facilities which can accommodate groups of various sizes and offers parking for up to 2,500 cars. Seven hundred and sixty-eight conferences were booked at Umodzi Park in 2016, with other large-scale events including performances by internationally known singer Joss Stone, who performed at the Magnificent Lilongwe Auditorium, Nigerian comedian Basket Mouth, and popular South African band, Micasa.



Image Source: [Peermont Group](#) - Bingu Wa Mutharika International Convention Centre

The BICC has also become the official venue for national and international parliamentary and governmental meetings, and Umodzi Park has been home to the Malawi Investment Trade Forum since 2015 and hosted the Africa Land Forces Summit in 2017

“Umodzi Park has set a new benchmark for Malawi’s hospitality industry and has provided efficient and contemporary convention facilities for dignitaries, business executives and foreign guests visiting Malawi’s capital city. From its five-star accommodation, restaurants and entertainment facilities to premium conferencing capabilities, Umodzi Park has become

the premiere destination for travellers all over the world,” continues Van der Nest

## Developing positive growth

Community development and job creation have also been key focus areas for the resort, with a core objective being to ensure sustainable development are achieved within the local community – Umodzi Park currently employs 236 people from Lilongwe and various other parts of the country and looks forward to increasing this number in coming years.

The resort has also introduced educational programmes designed to empower Malawian youth with the skills they need to pursue sustainable careers in the hospitality industry. For instance, Umodzi Park offers a four-month internship programme in partnership with the Malawi Institute of Tourism, providing MIT students with the opportunity to gain practical hospitality experience at its five-star President Walmont Hotel and at the world-class BICC. Since its launch in 2015, 75 students have benefited from participating in the comprehensive internship programme, with 10 interns offered employment at the resort.

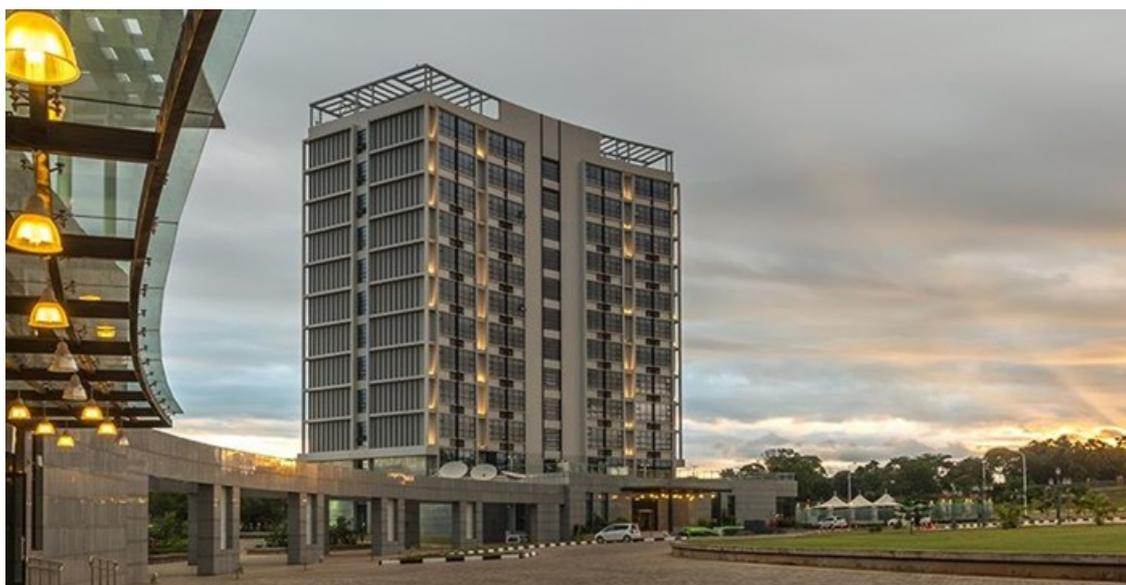


Image Source: [Peermont Group](#) - President Walmont, Umodzi Park

In addition, the establishment of Umodzi Park has made a significant positive impact on local tourism. Along with introducing much-needed conferencing facilities able to accommodate international and regional conferences in world-class style, the launch of a five-star hotel has challenged Malawi’s current industry, shedding light on areas for potential improvement within the hospitality industry.

## Increasing tourism offering

“Since its official opening, there has been increased attention on the level of service delivery, structural development and the need for improvement in Malawi’s hospitality industry. Industry players are seeing the need to up their game to take Malawi to greater heights in terms of its tourism offer,” says Van der Nest

Looking to the future, Van der Nest says that Umodzi Park plans to maintain and build its reputation for excellent service delivery in all areas of business, and keeping its brand promise of five-star luxury and world-class experiences.

“Umodzi Park will also continue to explore opportunities for new business to extend its loyal base of clientele. As always, we endeavour to engage with travellers, stakeholders and the local community to continue meeting and exceeding the needs of all our guests,” concludes Van der Nest.

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