



Arvana Singh NEDBANK CIB

Head sustainable finance solutions



Q *How did you come to specialise in sustainable finance – did your career or the needs of the market take you in this direction or was it a personal choice?*

A My career started off in 2009 as a credit analyst in investment banking. After gaining a good grounding, I subsequently moved into a front line structured solutions role and then into a debt capital markets environment where I spent a vast majority of my career. During my time in debt capital markets I was exposed to, and was at the forefront of, macro development factors (of which climate change was quickly evolving as one), capital flows and investor trends and had the platform to develop financial instruments. Combining this knowledge and platform with an innovation mindset, structuring expertise and strong collaboration with key stakeholders enabled the creation of the green bond instruments which found huge deal success in the market and importantly achieves positive impact. Building on this momentum I was provided the opportunity to create a Sustainable Finance Solutions business within the Corporate and Investment Bank in November 2020, with a focus on developing and delivering innovative sustainability focused products covering lending, arranging, co-ordinating and advisory services. Since establishing the business we have concluded a number of significant deals which includes having structured a R1bn sustainability linked debt financing facility for Imperial Logistics, which represents a first for the company, and having structured and co-ordinated a R10bn currency equivalent debt financing package for Harmony Gold consisting of a green loan and multi-currency sustainability linked loan facilities, marking one of the largest sustainable finance transactions to have been concluded in South Africa.

Q *Do you have any unusual hobbies / do you participate in any leisure activities?*

A I enjoy yoga practice during down time. My favourite yoga pose is “birds of paradise pose” as it is a challenging pose, which tests both physical and mental strength requiring focus, strength and balance, it provides a feeling that anything is possible and symbolises aspiring to a higher level. This resonates with me and the desire that I have to be challenged, to rise above and to remain curious about possibilities.

I also enjoy different genres of music, reading motivational books, spending time in nature and spending quality time with family and friends.

Q *Do you think this area of expertise requires any special attributes and if so, what would you say they are?*

A Yes. Ability to employ systems value thinking, perform qualitative and quantitative value assessments, be able to employ an opportunities and risk mindset and be able to identify levers to enhance value creation across various dimensions. In addition you should be able to think creatively and structure robust solutions and, have the courage and tenacity to lead, pioneer, develop, test and land solutions in the market.

You need to maintain a good read of the market, foster networks and relationships, and be able to effectively collaborate with key players in the ecosystem to develop and execute on ideas.

Q *Do you find this area of expertise to be an exciting field and if so, why?*

A Yes, sustainable finance is transforming the way that mainstream finance is being offered to clients. This area of finance has valuable attributes attached to it which aim to make positive impacts in the environmental, social and governance dimensions. These are desperately needed to assist in mitigating against systematic and unsystematic risks and to be able to support societal and economic resilience and growth. ♻️

