



# Q&A

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### What shaped your interest in finance?

My interest in finance was not something I deliberately pursued. More than 18 years ago, I was an economist by training, and started my career and professional exposure by working across Africa and other emerging markets. It became evident to me that finance and access to finance were foundational to the diversification and inclusive development of our economies.

Whether it is providing working capital to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), private equity and venture capital for nurturing Africa's innovation ecosystem and scaling homegrown enterprises, channelling long-term investment into infrastructure and industrialisation, or unlocking intra-African trade opportunities under regional trade agreements, finance sits at the heart of our continent's progress. It determines who participates in the economy, how value chains are built, and whether countries can fully leverage both their natural resources and human capital.

This triggered my interest in external finance from global actors such as China, and how this significantly altered Africa's infrastructure landscape from the late 2000s. I also began working more closely within the domestic financial ecosystem, as strengthening the continent's long-term growth and resilience will also hinge on deeper local capital markets. Building trust in financial institutions and expanding access to finance at all levels – from micro-entrepreneurs to large-scale investment – creates financial inclusion that does not only allow banking access, but economic empowerment and opportunity.

### What did your path into this field look like – was it intentional, or did you discover it along the way?

Given the above, it's clear that my path was not intentional. But, working across sectors, I have had the privilege of being at the intersection of economics and finance. For example, I've supported Deloitte Africa on industry research into private equity in Africa over the past decade, assisting to identify trends, opportunities, markets and projects for investment across countries and industries, while also focusing on highlighting the challenges faced by smaller businesses and women-owned enterprises – from financial literacy to inclusion and access. I've also had the opportunity to work on a diverse portfolio of research, market studies and economic assignments for investment and commercial banks, payments network processors, asset managers, development finance institutions, investment funds, insurance companies, telecommunication and technology companies, as well as private equity players.

More recently, I have had the privilege to "connect the dots" and help fly the African flag as part of South Africa's G20 Presidency, and specifically the voice of business in this grouping, under the

B20. With Deloitte Africa appointed as the Knowledge Partner to the B20 Finance & Infrastructure Taskforce, I have been part of conversations that are shaping key actions and recommendations for greater access to finance, particularly for women and small businesses on our continent, to help unlock sustainable growth through infrastructure development.

### What does work-life balance mean for you and have your views on work-life balance changed over time?

For much of my career, I was deeply work-orientated – my professional ambitions and responsibilities often dictated the rhythm of my life. In hindsight, work-life balance was not something I consciously pursued. I thrived on intensity, long hours, and the sense of purpose that came from pushing myself to deliver at a high level.

While I am still goal and purpose-driven, some adjustments needed to be made with the birth of my daughter in 2018. Becoming a parent fundamentally reshaped how I define balance and what I value day to day, with demands on my time now no longer only professional, but certainly very personal, emotional and constant. Navigating this new terrain required intentional adjustments, including building a strong support system, learning to say "no" without guilt, and accepting that I can step back and trust others to lead and execute. Work-life balance to me is less about rigid boundaries and more about conscious choices, including clarity about what truly matters and being able to "switch off" from work so I can be present in the moment with my husband and our two beautiful children.

### Did you have a mentor and, if so, what was the most important thing you learnt from them?

Throughout my career, I've drawn inspiration from a wide range of individuals, each leaving a quiet but meaningful imprint on how I think, lead and live.

One of the most valuable lessons taken from them is confidence – not just the kind that shows up on a stage, but a deep grounded confidence in my capabilities and knowledge, leadership and persuasion, communication and professionalism; and importantly, my ability to inspire others.

The second lesson has been more personal: that how we engage and accept one another, especially in today's fractured world, matters more than ever. True connection is rooted in humility and purpose. It's not about self-promotion or personal recognition, but about making space for others to grow and thrive. Those who have inspired me have led with generosity – of time, insights, and care – and with a commitment to lifting others. Their example always reminds me that lasting impact comes from what we give, rather than what we take. 🌱

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