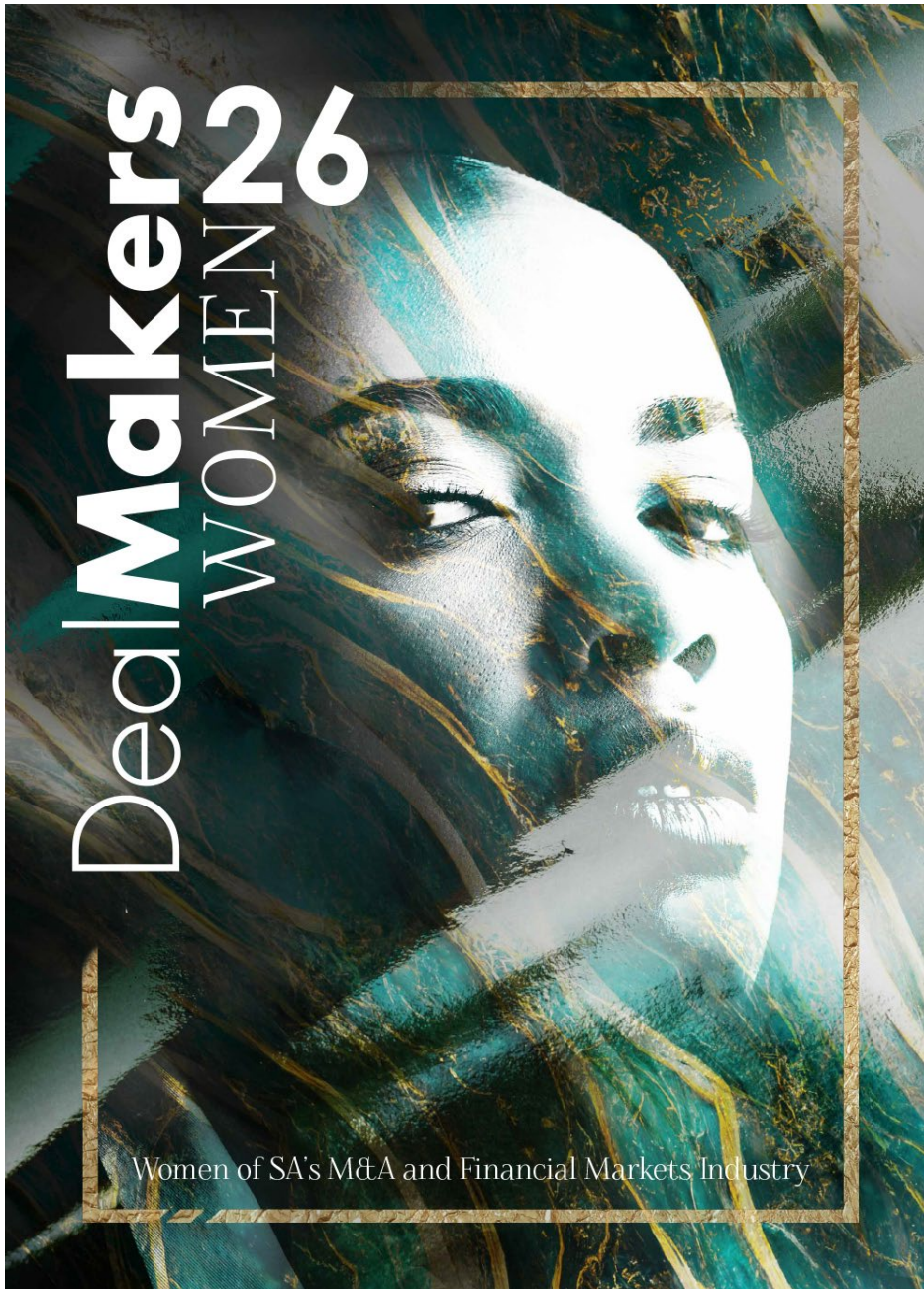


# August 2026

## Deal**Makers**<sup>®</sup>WOMEN 2026

Women of SA's M&A and Financial Markets Industry



## Special Feature

# ABOUT THE FEATURE

Since launching in 2021 with the profiles of 67 incredible women in South Africa's M&A industry, the Deal**Makers** Women's feature has grown into a highly anticipated annual tradition.

The extraordinary journeys, insights, and expertise shared by these leaders inspired us to expand our reach each year.

In 2022, we proudly introduced the features: Catalyst Women of SA's Private Equity and Venture Capital Markets alongside the Deal**Makers AFRICA** Women in M&A and Capital Markets.

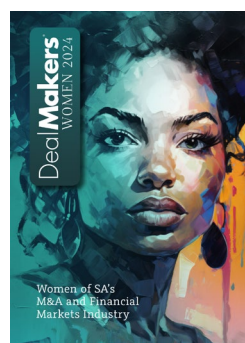
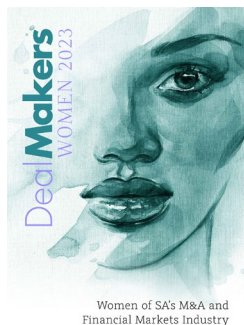
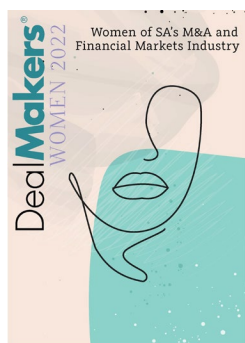
Building on this momentum, 2023 marked the launch of our inaugural event: Women in M&A and a premium hardcopy book combining all three prestigious features.

Take a look at the previous issues:

SA Women of M&A [2021](#) | [2022](#) | [2023](#) | [2024](#) | [2025](#)

Catalyst Women in Private Equity [2022](#) | [2023](#) | [2024](#) | [2025](#)

Africa Women of M&A [2022](#) | [2023](#) | [2024](#) | [2025](#)



# HOW TO BE INCLUDED IN THE 2026 FEATURE

The feature is open to all M&A, corporate finance and financial market participants, including advisory firms AND in-house practitioners.

## Listing options in the magazine

- Q&A
- Insights article
- Profile article

**All magazine listing info must be supplied by no later than: Thursday 30 July 2026**

Once the listings have been sent to layout, they will be sent back for sign off.

All listings need to be signed off by no later than **Monday 11 August 2026**





# LISTING OPTIONS (examples)

## Q&A

Q&A

Mari Rabie  
Corporate Finance Transaction



Q What led you to pursue a career in M&A at the Financial Markets?

A I started my career as an executive assistant to the CEO of Remgro Limited, and had not specifically intended to pursue a career in corporate finance. During my time as an executive assistant, I was privileged to be exposed to companies of various sizes in different sectors, diverse business functions and several deals, which provided insight into a variety of potential career paths. However, my analytical nature, aptitude for financial education and affinity for a high-performance environment sparked a curiosity for, and interest in, corporate finance. A few dealmakers had suggested that I should consider corporate finance and, as I'm energised by seeking out new challenges, I made the move and joined RMB Corporate Finance. I'm a member of the sector team that is mostly focused on Retail advisory.

Q What was the toughest deal [listing] issue you ever worked on and why?

A I was privileged to work as part of the RMB team that advised Dsail Group Holdings Limited (Dsail) in respect of the recent intricate three-way cross border deal which combined Dsail, Heinlein International's South African assets and a majority interest in Namibia Thevenet Limited to form a South African domiciled company, Heinlein Beverages. The highly complex transaction comprised intricate inter-conditional steps, numerous stakeholders, and spanned over several years. Being involved in the steady and deliberate journey of executing the deal, guiding our client through the many challenges arising from the multi-jurisdictional complexities, and ultimately closing the deal, was exhilarating and rewarding. I also had the opportunity to work with exceptional professionals, including some formidable women.

Q What is your favourite sector to do a deal in and why?

A I haven't worked in every sector (yet), so it would be unfair to pick a favourite, but I do enjoy the Retail sector. The Retail sector touches most individuals in one way or another almost daily, even if it's just seeing an advertisement. It is a sector that has been constantly disrupted generally, and specifically in South Africa over the last few years, forcing management teams to constantly problem-solve and rethink their strategies to establish greater operational resilience. I like the fact that even though the underlying principle of selling goods and services to customers remains the same, the changing environment and changing customer needs require companies to constantly improve their offering to better serve customers. As financial advisors, we play a role in assisting them to achieve that.

Q If you could change one thing on your career path to date, what would it be and why?

A I think life is a sequence of defining moments, so it's hard to look back and isolate one thing in my career to date. All the moments, previous roles and experiences (good and bad) have helped to define who I am and where I find my self today, and I wouldn't want to change that.

Q What piece of advice would you give a young woman working on her first deal transaction?

A I was recently invited to speak at the first "Team topping ceremony of a local girls' school. The speech was based on the "moolik" I had developed in my previous life as an athlete, and how the young ladies could consider applying these "tools" in their upcoming season. After the talk, two prominent South African businessmen remarked how these "tools" are also very applicable and useful in

one's career.

1. Have specific and visible goals – Write them down, stick them on your mirror, save them as your phone background as a conscious reminder of what you are working towards every day.

2. Just do your job – Don't focus on the end goal, focus on getting your job done and being accountable. If you do your job well every day, and try to be better today than you were yesterday, the end goal will come.

3. Stop feeling sorry for yourself and keep the positive momentum – Things go wrong, you must learn to deal with it. If it does, do not feel sorry for yourself, but change your framing and keep on moving forward to keep the momentum going in the right direction.

4. It takes what it takes – Being successful in most endeavours (including M&A) requires hard work, dealing with pressure, sacrifices and often being tired. If you want to be good, you don't really have a lot of choices – you must be prepared to do what you have to do to be successful, because it takes what it takes.

5. Celebrate success – Your own and that of others!

Q What do you do to unwind [get away from the stress of work]?

A I find that immersing myself in nature and exercise, preferably both at the same time, restores my energy levels and increases my resilience. It may sound counterintuitive, but I really like exercising at high intensity during stressful work periods. I think it's become exercising at high intensity requires focus, which clears my mind of everything else and physically fatigues me, both of which result in better quality sleep and improved cognitive function.

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

My journey into this field was quite serendipitous, as it was something I discovered later in my career rather than pursuing intentionally from the outset. I found myself working on three different integration and carve-out projects, and it was during these experiences that I realised the potential for building a career in this area. With a background in Industrial Engineering, I developed my skillset through numerous large-scale, cross-functional business and technology transformation projects. Although I initially assumed that a finance background was a prerequisite for engaging in M&A projects, I've come to appreciate that my extensive experience across various functions and industries allows me to swiftly comprehend how the different components of a business interconnect. This understanding has proven invaluable in evaluating how a carve-out or integration affects various facets of a business, encompassing people, processes and technology.

What was your first deal or transaction like, and what did you take away from it?

My first significant transaction was the carve-out and sale of more than 50 retail stores from a well-known national retailer. This experience was both challenging and rewarding, as it required close collaboration with a diverse group of individuals across the business. The anticipation leading up to Day 1 was palpable, following months of meticulous preparation and planning. Each day during the rollout period was filled with engaging check-ins, ensuring that every detail was accounted for and that the transition would proceed smoothly. Witnessing everything come together seamlessly on Day 1 was an incredibly gratifying moment, as it highlighted the collective effort and dedication of everyone involved in the project. This experience taught me the importance of teamwork and thorough preparation for achieving successful outcomes in complex transactions.

What's the hardest lesson you've learnt, and how did it shape you?

The hardest lesson I've learnt in my career is that solving complex problems goes beyond merely constructing academically correct solutions; it's fundamentally about engaging with real people – genuine human beings with unique perspectives and motivations. Initially, I focused heavily on the technical aspects of problem-solving, but I soon realised that the human element is equally, if not more important. I had to cultivate the skill of listening attentively and taking the time to understand what drives individuals, as these factors can significantly influence the success or failure of a solution. This lesson has shaped me by emphasising the

Q&A

Christelle van den Heever  
Senior Manager | M&A Deal Transformation  
Consulting Services  
Deloitte Africa

Importance of empathy and communication in my approach to problem-solving. Additionally, part of this journey involved learning to listen to myself, trusting my instincts, and recognising my own needs and motivations. This holistic understanding has been critical for developing solutions that are not only effective, but also resonate with the people involved.

What does self-care look like for you, and how do you prevent burnout?

For me, self-care is a multifaceted practice that involves being intentional about the choices I make in both my personal and professional life. It's about consciously deciding what aspects I'm willing to compromise on, and recognising the moments when it's important to stand firm on my principles. This intentionality extends to being fully present in whatever activity I'm engaged in, whether it's burning the midnight oil on a demanding project or enjoying a leisurely walk with my dogs. By immersing myself in the moment, I find that I can better appreciate the nuances of each experience and maintain a sense of balance. This approach not only helps me manage stress effectively, but also prevents burnout by ensuring that I remain connected to the things that bring me joy and fulfillment. Ultimately, self-care is about nurturing my wellbeing and creating a sustainable rhythm that supports both my personal growth and professional success.

Have your views on work-life balance changed over time?

Over time, my perspective on work-life balance has undergone a significant transformation. Initially, I viewed it as something that could be achieved by taking a holiday or a break after completing a major project. However, I've come to realise that true work-life balance is a daily practice, requiring consistent attention and effort, to maintain equilibrium between professional responsibilities and personal wellbeing. This shift in understanding has been influenced by insights from our M&A leadership team, who emphasised the importance of creating regular opportunities for team members to connect on a social level. By encouraging individuals to share their hobbies, passions and interests, we foster a sense of community and support that is essential for achieving balance at the team level, contributing to a more fulfilling and sustainable work environment.

What keeps you motivated on tough days?

On tough days, my motivation comes from being immersed in a high-performing environment alongside high-achieving individuals. The collaborative spirit and shared commitment to success create an atmosphere where continuous growth is not just encouraged, but expected.

Deloitte.

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Q&A

Natalie Di-Sante  
Executive Head – Regulatory  
Standard Bank

What initially drew you to a career in M&A or corporate finance?

I never considered a career in corporate finance, and was introduced into a role in a corporate finance team without knowing what it really entailed. The moment I learnt more about the environment and what the work involved, I was hooked. I was curious to learn more about M&A, and found the work intriguing and interesting. It seemed to be a highly pressured and challenging environment, but rewarding. I enjoyed the complexity of transactions, the thought process around structuring, and overlaying the regulations.

Have there been key decisions that significantly impacted your career trajectory?

The decision to join Standard Bank's corporate finance team impacted my career trajectory. It provided me with opportunities, and has been a tremendous learning curve. It has also been a very rewarding career path. I have worked on many different transactions, some of which were really complex, as well as new listings on the JSE. The exposure has been tremendous.

How have you built resilience in a high-pressure, male-dominated environment?

Resilience is built over time, as you grow and learn to deal with situations. I have learnt that you never have to stand back, make excuses or be afraid to voice your opinion, and that being spoken is actually okay.

How have you balanced your personal life with the demands of a career in finance?

When I started my career in corporate finance, my children were small and work pressures were real. The hours were long, and

spending time with family was limited. I had to find a way to juggle and balance this and, for me, it was important to make sure that I set aside time to spend with my family.

It was important to try and attend events that motivated me, even if it meant that when I got home later I had to complete what I needed to finish from a work perspective, or get up early the next morning to get through the "to do" list.

I have a better work-life balance now, and it's important for me to have "me time".

What does self-care look like for you, and how do you prevent burnout?

Fortunately, I have always been able to cope with stress. Self-care for me is focusing on taking care of myself by exercising, eating well, and making sure that I get sufficient rest in order to do this.

What advice would you give to your younger self starting out in this field?

My advice would be to keep going and never give up. There are days where things are difficult and challenging, and sometimes the learning curve is huge, but just know that you can do it. Build and treasure relationships. It is also always a good idea to have a mentor. Try and become part of a team where there are opportunities to learn and grow within a supportive leadership structure.

What keeps you motivated on tough days?

The belief that all will be okay, and knowing that although challenges come our way, you always come out stronger in the end. And then it's the coffee and conversations with my daughter, who is always prepared to just listen.



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Q&A

Della Levinsohn  
Head of Legal | Principal Investments

Investec

Q What led you to pursue a career in private equity?

A I've always dreamt of a career in the performing arts, so enrolling in a BCom LLB instead of auditioning for drama school was a case of my head overruling my heart, a decision I don't regret. While I loved practising law, joining Investec provided the opportunity to focus more on the commercial and financial aspects of transactions, and I particularly enjoyed being part of a deal team. Investec's distinctive culture resonated deeply with me from the outset. Having spent several years in project finance, I left Investec to set up a specialist project finance legal advisory firm, around the time when my husband and I were discussing starting a family – this was back when flexibility was not the accepted practice that it is today. When I was approached a decade or so later to join the Investec Group Legal team, I did so on a half-day basis (well, in theory, at least), and moved to a full-time role in private equity a few years ago. So, the journey to this point has definitely not been a linear one.

Q What, in your opinion, is the hardest part of a transaction?

A In my view, the hardest part of transactions is reconciling competing interests – whether balancing legal niceties against commercial realism, finding workable solutions to the opposing tensions of various stakeholders' requirements, or standing your ground on matters of principle while still maintaining open and effective lines of communication with all parties.

Q What is your median for private equity activity over the next 3-5 years?

A We've already seen a uptick in private equity activity since the elections in South Africa, and expect this trend to continue, reflecting the rally in shares in SA Inc. This outlook is, of course, largely dependent on

the sustainability of the incentives provided by global equity markets. Our team is well-positioned to execute on one of the Investec Group's key strategic actions: the reduction in the Group's on-balance short equity investment portfolio to optimise shareholder returns, while proactively seeking opportunities to support our clients with equity in franchise businesses.

Q What attributes do you think are essential for a good legal adviser?

A As a lawyer, finding your negotiating style can take time, in my experience, a combination of commerciality, confidence and respect make for the most effective conversations. Getting to grips with the finer details of the transaction is essential, even if (in fact, especially) if this means reaching out to colleagues for input in areas which are out of your comfort zone. Maintaining your composure when the pressure is on is a must-have attribute. The ability to prioritise (and the flexibility to constantly re-prioritise during the day) is essential.

Q What do you do to unwind and get away from the stress of work?

A I love music and dancing, so dance classes are my ultimate de-stresser. I am passionate about musical theatre, and try to see as much as possible. Spending time with family and friends is always a tonic for my soul. Walking my beloved dog Coco also ranks high up there! I definitely feel the benefits of meditation, and try to carve out time for this most days.

Q What advice would you give to someone starting a career in financial services?

A There is no substitute for these hard work.

The "work-life" scale is seldom in perfect balance; it is a continuous adjustment between the two, as it is to the answer of how far it lies in one direction, and conscious about how long it can remain there. This is advice which I definitely haven't mastered yet, the juggling

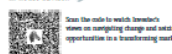
act continues to be a challenge for me. Strive not to overcommit or bring your authentic self at work. Don't hesitate to ask questions (or hesitate, but ask anyway). As uncomfortable as it might be, don't shy away from having those difficult conversations, take time to crystallise your intention beforehand, and go in well-prepared. As anxiety-provoking as they might be, the hard discussions are often the ones where respect and credibility are earned.

Q What has been your experience of women supporting other women in the workplace?

A My experiences have been predominantly "positive", most of my female colleagues are genuinely and proactively supportive. I've had the pleasure and privilege of being part of a small, informal network of women at Investec, who have both challenged and inspired me. Many of us from that original group have now formed our own "circles" – I've started a Women Lawyers @ Investec group, which has fostered an incredibly special connection between its members. We've also created several networking events for women in the organisation, which have been particularly well received, and plan to make these a regular feature.

Q What, in your opinion, is the biggest difference between working as an external legal adviser and being an in-house legal counsel in the private equity space?

A While both in-house and external counsel have to deal with multi-faceted legal agreements within a complex regulatory framework, internal legal advisers are also constantly reconciling these against the requirements of credit and investment committees, the team's mandate and strategy, and the organisation's macro-economic assumptions. Consciously testing issues against internal risk appetite – and choosing the response necessary – is also part of the role of an in-house adviser.



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# LISTING OPTIONS (examples)

## Profiles | Insights

### WOMEN WHO LIFT



#### Sally Hutton and Martine Leukes on their mentorship relationship

Success is not only measured by deals closed or accolades earned, but also by the ability to lift others – to recognise potential, nurture young talent, and actively create space for growth. That philosophy underlies the mentorship relationship between Sally Hutton and Martine Leukes, a pair whose dynamic, collaborative partnership is the power of intentional support and a shared commitment to excellence.

Sally is a private equity MBA specialist and a partner at Webber Wentzel, having recently completed a decade as the firm's managing partner. Martine is a corporate lawyer and senior associate in Sally's team, with a focus on private equity and venture capital transactions.

Their professional paths first crossed in 2018, when Martine completed a rotation as a candidate attorney in Sally's team. Their relationship deepened when Martine returned to the team as a first-year associate in 2020. Sally and Martine first worked directly together on a major transaction in 2021, when Martine supported Sally on the acquisition of Crossover Technology, a leading player in the South African fintech industry by a consortium of investors led by the Ethos Mid-Market Fund (now infintio Partners).

"The Crossover transaction was the first time that Martine and I worked directly together on a major deal, and I immediately noticed that she had a calm confidence, good legal instincts, a sharp eye for both the bigger picture and for detail, and an incredible work ethic. She also has a wonderful way with people. Those are all valuable traits for dealmaking, which indicate the potential to go far in this field."

But potential alone doesn't build a career – it is shaped through opportunity, experience and exposure, trust, and mutual investment. Martine reflects that what has made Sally's mentorship meaningful wasn't just that Sally noticed her – it was what she did with that insight.

"Working with Sally directly over the past four years has been the most formative experience of my legal career. Sally's guidance has not only sharpened my technical abilities, but she has also created space for me to meaningfully contribute, ask questions, and learn in real time. Sally gave me a seat at the table – and once I was there, she made sure I had a voice."

Martine's skills have been honed by working on some of the firm's most complex M&A matters, including high-profile transactions with tight timelines and significant complexity and pressure.

Working alongside Sally, Martine is encouraged to take ownership of deliverables, contribute to strategy formulation, and develop her client skills by engaging directly with clients – not in the background, but as a central member of the team. In so doing, Martine has developed strong client relationships. For instance, she played an

integral role in the team advising on the disposal of Retail Capital by Croxto to Tyndebank in 2022, and also supported Sally again on the disposal of Adumo by Croxto to Lesaka last year.

"Mentorship is not just about giving advice – it's about being present, consistently," Martine says. "Sally shows up. Even during a fast-moving transaction, she makes time to check-in and provide real-time guidance. She listens and genuinely cares about the team's wellbeing – both in and outside of the office. That kind of support is rare, and it's made all the difference to my growth."

Why Sally brings deep experience and leadership to the table, she's quick to point out that the relationship is a synergistic one.

"It is impossible to manage multiple transactions without teamwork and collaboration. Having someone like Martine on your team brings enormous peace of mind, as I know that the cases just as much as I do about getting things right. She gets on with things, but also knows when to check in for guidance or direction. Martine also has real emotional intelligence and brings a fresh lens – one that reflects the evolving expectations of younger professionals in the industry. That perspective encourages open dialogue and sometimes challenges the status quo, which keeps us all sharper and more adaptive. That helps me lead better too. And it's so important to have fun when you're working hard – we laugh a lot."

Their collaborative approach is evident in the way they bring out the best in each other. "Sally trusts me with real responsibility, but I always know she was there," Martine says. "She challenged me to think more boldly, but always with support and kindness. That kind of backing builds confidence fast."

For Sally, mentoring is part of how she defines success. "Doing good work matters – but building great people matters more. If we've led significant deals, but haven't developed others in the process, then we've missed the point. We're building the next generation of leaders and a legacy of excellence, not just closing deals."

For Martine, it's been transformative. "I've learned that you don't need to change who you are to succeed – you just need someone who sees your potential and is willing to guide you. Sally does that for me. We've worked crazy hours, faced tough issues, and debated differences of opinion – but always with respect. And we always have a glass of bubbles or a whiskey after a long transaction," says Martine. "It's not just mentorship. It's partnership."

Their story is a reminder that when women actively support one another, everyone benefits.

WEBBER WENTZEL

in alliance with Linklaters

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Lydia Shadrach-Razzino  
Partner and Head | Corporate M&A Practice  
Baker McKenzie Johannesburg

### Baker McKenzie

Lydia is continuously recognised for her legal proficiency and was most recently included in the *Legal 500 Private Practice Powerlist 2024, M&A Africa* – a meticulously researched guide that showcases Africa's very best.

She was a shortlisted finalist for *DealMaker of the Year in 2020 and again in 2021*, and received the award in 2021, making her the first woman in the history of the award to have won.

In 2022, Lydia was also awarded the *Client Choice M&A Lawyer of the Year Award*. In 2014, she was awarded the *ABSP Corporate Finance Lawyer of the Year Award*. She is also recognised by *Chambers (the M&A and Private Equity), Legal 500 and Best Lawyers, and is featured in Who's Who Legal*.

Lydia has advised on several investment transactions including *Indicore's acquisition of an interest in Vodafone Equity, which was awarded Deal of the Year 2021 at the DealMakers Gala Awards. She advised Ascendis on its disposal of its Annual Health Sciences to Ascendis Private Equity, which was awarded Capital Private Equity Deal of the Year 2021.*

**Practice Focus**  
Lydia focuses on public and private M&A and private equity transactions across various industries, and also advises on empowerment transactions, corporate governance, equity

capital market transactions and general corporate finance. Her experience equals beyond South Africa, having advised on numerous cross-border transactions.

#### Representative Legal Matters

- Advised Capitalworks on the disposal of Much Asphalt (left side managed assets portfolio). This transaction was awarded *Capital Private Equity Deal of the Year 2017*.
- Advised Grindrod Ltd regarding a spin-off of the shipping business of the Grindrod Group and listed it on the Nasdaq (primary) and JSE (secondary).
- Advised Mammut on the disposal of its Cambridge, Idaho and Mammoth operations.
- Advised Norfund on equity investments.
- Advised a consortium led by RMB and Invenio on their acquisition of 76.9% of Kamoni Distribution, a Botswana-based retailer and consumer goods company.
- Advised RMB and Invenio on the disposal of a percentage of their interest in Kamoni to the Botswana Development Corporation.
- Advised RMB Corvet in the acquisition of the Adcorp Support Services from Adcorp.
- Advised RMB Ventures in the acquisition of the Bluff Mountain Supply Group, which was awarded *Capital Private Equity Deal of the Year 2013*.

Advised RMB Ventures on the disposal of Tossana, the global market leader in the supply of sulphur dioxide generating plants.

Advised SAB Zimbe in the Aubeen-Busch Invenio BEE transaction (scheme of arrangement).

Advised The Fouchie Group in its acquisition of the JET business from Ecom.

Advised The Fouchie Group in its R3.5b rights issue with both a local and international offering element.

Advised International Finance Corporation on numerous equity investments.

Advised Vodafone on an acquisition of a 24.94% indirect interest in Safaricom from Vodafone International by acquiring 87.9% of the issued share capital of Vodafone Kenya and a subscription by Vodafone for ordinary shares in Vodafone.

Advised Vodafone on its acquisition of 0.51% interest in IOT by way of a sale (by the existing shareholders of IOT) and subscription, and (ii) 51% interest in IOT by way of a subscription. Jurisdictions involved: Netherlands, US and South Africa.

Advised Vodafone on its acquisition of a stake in Vodafone Egypt (VCE).

Experience obtained prior to joining Baker McKenzie.

- Professional Honours**
  - Included in the *Legal 500 Private Practice Powerlist 2024, M&A Africa*.
  - Winn, Client Choice Award for M&A Lawyer of the Year 2022.
  - Ranked, Chambers Global, Corporate/M&A, South Africa, 2018-2023.
  - Ranked, Chambers Global, Corporate/M&A, South Africa, 2016-2017, 2019-2023.
  - Ranked, Best Lawyers Corporate/M&A, South Africa, 2014-2024.

- Recognition**
  - Ranked, Corporate Finance Lawyer, Legal 500, Commercial, Corporate and M&A, South Africa, 2018-2019, 2021-2022.
  - Winner of the Individual DealMaker of the Year by DealMakers in 2021, the first female in history to win this award.
  - Shortlisted for the Best Individual DealMaker of the Year by DealMakers in 2020.
  - Winn, Corporate Finance Lawyer of the Year Award by the Association of Black Attorneys and Investment Professionals, 2014 and 2015.

- Finalist, Corporate Finance Lawyer of the Year Award by the Association of Black Attorneys and Investment Professionals**
- Professional Associations and Memberships**
  - Law Society of South Africa
- Education**
  - University of KwaZulu-Natal (BCom)
  - University of KwaZulu-Natal (LLB)



Soria Hay  
Founder and Head of Corporate Finance  
Bravura Group

Dear younger me,

You're standing on the precipice of a bold idea. You don't know it yet, but that spark – the quiet, relentless desire to do things differently – is about to change the face of corporate finance in Southern Africa.

You've walked away from a traditional legal career, honed your skills in corporate finance, and now, with a four-year-old daughter and a one-year-old son, you're founding your own firm. You'll name it Bravura – a word from music, a field you've always loved. It means great technical skill and brilliance shown in performance. But more than that, it means daring. Expression. Soul. You'll choose this name because what you're building must be more than clear deal structures and clean spreadsheets. It must be a masterpiece, crafted with discipline, heart and boldness.

Under your guidance, Bravura will grow into one of the largest, award-winning independent advisory and structuring houses in Southern Africa, with offices in South Africa, Namibia and Mauritius. Along the way, you'll earn the trust of high-net-worth clients, bold entrepreneurs, blue-chip companies and corporate trailblazers who value insight, integrity and innovation. But beyond the numbers, you'll build something deeper: an enduring culture of excellence.

You'll learn that leadership isn't a job title. It's a way of being. It's in how you listen, teach and create space for others to lead. The people who thrive at Bravura may not be the loudest, but they'll be driven, principled and resilient. You'll reject outdated hierarchies. At Bravura, leadership will never be a grant. It will be a circle. And in that circle, everyone has a voice.

Your belief in mentorship will guide you. Not mentorship from the top down, but side-by-side support, investment in potential, an honest, sometimes heated conversation. You'll learn by doing, by showing up, and by holding others to the same high standards you hold for yourself. That you only as good as you are your last email, your last meeting, your last deliverable. That excellence is the bare minimum. That average is easy, but brilliance is a choice.

You'll be a mother. A partner. And a leader. And you'll find your own rhythm, holding these roles together. It won't be about balance, because balance is a myth. It will be about clarity, choosing your priorities, protecting your time, and being present when it matters. Birthdays. School concerts. Celebrating the wins and learning from the losses. You'll remind your team that you don't make time for your health, you'll be forced to make time for your fitness. You'll encourage exercise, boundaries and self-discipline. Not as luxuries, but as necessities for sustainable success.

You'll often say, "Tomorrow is not another day." It's not just a phrase. It's a call to urgency to show up every day with intention. And you'll teach your team that proactivity isn't about meeting client expectations; it's about exceeding them. Not for applause, but for pride.

At Bravura, you'll build a space where people have agency. Where some 50+ team members feel they can make a difference. Where, regardless of how young or junior they may be, they are expected to carry the conversation in front of CEOs, to speak with insight, and to lead without waiting to be asked. Because confidence isn't arrogance. It's clarity and clarity is power.

You'll also speak truth about entrepreneurship. You'll tell young leaders start with two questions – "What do I love?" and "Where will my first cash come from?" That's your business plan. Without passion and cashflow, you don't have a business. And even as you scale, you'll keep coming back to that truth: watch your cash. Forget fancy models, cash is the lifeblood. And so is innovation. You'll teach your team that implementation and organisation must coexist. That doing the work and creating the pipeline are not separate disciplines. They're symbiotic. Neglect one, and the other collapses. This will become the Bravura way: high standards, strong relationships, and relentless delivery. When you meet potential clients, you won't just pitch. You'll listen. You'll iterate. You'll plant seeds that grow into long-term value.

When it comes to client relationships, you'll remind your team: we are worthy. We don't stay in environments that don't value what we bring to the table. We work where we can make a difference, and where that difference is recognised. And above all else, every day, we'll try to laugh.

You'll channel all of this into building something that outlasts you. You'll launch the Corporate Finance Graduate Academy, designed to give academically gifted African women the opportunity to thrive in a traditionally exclusive field. Not as a tick box, but as a mission to unlock talent that deserves to be seen. And you'll support organisations like Abrahim Kriel Bamaniwani (AKB) – a 120-year-old foundation that provides a haven of hope for orphaned hearts. Because creating value must also mean creating impact.

You'll continue to lead, shape strategy and review every document down to the last comma. But you'll also hang Norman Catherine's art on your boardroom walls, as a reminder that in finance, creativity is as essential as rigor. That a powerful idea, like powerful artwork, moves people. And you'll realize this is what leadership looks like: it's not loud. It's not flashy. It's real. And it's yours.

So go ahead. Start the company. Hang the art. Raise your children. Build your masterpiece. Because you can have it all. With positivity.

Soria

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RAISING RESILIENT LEADERS

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### INSIGHT



Kuda Chimedza  
Director | Banking, Finance & Projects  
CDH South Africa

#### MINING RESILIENCE: HOW WOMEN CAN EXTRACT SUCCESS FROM STRUGGLE

When I started my career, I didn't fully appreciate the role of resilience. It is not an abstract ideal, but a currency forged through wearying calls, law-of-attraction dilemmas, unspoken issues, unrelenting pressure, and still showing up with excellence and integrity. This women's month, I hope to highlight the power of resilience as a resource in building our careers and communities.

Mining is a violent process that ultimately extracts value. In the same way, resilience is not born from ease, but from confrontation and resistance. For women, it must become a core characteristic. Resilience is what keeps the candidate attorney focused while navigating the transition to the corporate world. It keeps the young attorney engaged while scaling new frontiers. It enables a woman in a male-dominated space to correct assumptions, calmly but firmly, resulting in a better kind of leadership.

Financial necessity limited my choices, and I applied only to the university where I could rely on the staff bursary and eventually the merit scholarship. My background didn't allow for pursuing passion; I had to keep in mind financial prospects when establishing and pursuing my goals. I discovered the timelines for securing articles late, and began the job hunt only in my third year. I applied to the large firms, and initially, my prospects looked good as I was selected for a vacation work programme. However, I interviewed badly and failed to secure a contract. I subsequently applied to medium-sized firms that boutique firms, and received rejections, even from the 'safer' options. Balancing my studies and my two-part-time jobs was challenging, and each rejection and unanswered application affected my performance. By the time I started my final semester, it seemed all doors had been firmly shut, but I continued applying myself as best as I could. Hours after my final exam, I was offered articles at CDH.

Starting articles brought new difficulties. Transitioning from being a top student to being taught the very basics was challenging. For the first time in my life, I was struggling to learn and regularly found myself questioning my place. It often felt like a continuous cycle of information overload and spot tests. I found it difficult to relate to my peers, having a distinct accent and a different background. I couldn't relate to the experiences that seemed to unite the group, nor could I contribute meaningfully to lunch-time discussions, such as conversations about lavish vacations. After leaving the office, I would take two taxis to get home then cook for the family and clean. I would read late into the night, so that I would have useful contributions to make in meetings the following day.

I would watch the sunrise the next morning in my first flat, then walk to work from my second flat dropping me off. Sometimes heavy news would make me arrive at the office looking completely dishevelled only to be met with comments around personal branding. The associate in my first team often asked me why I looked so tired, but I found my daily routine difficult to explain to her. My health was suffering due to it. It wasn't just starting a new job. It was a whole cultural change, that came with its share of shock and disorientation. All of this and more, worked together to kill my confidence, and slowly but certainly cause self-doubt that has taken years to remedy.

As an associate, I experienced a combination of crash courses in law and life. Often I had to juggle between humility and advocating for myself. I had insecurities around my competence, and thankfully as my career continued, I had colleagues and clients who affirmed my skills. I pursued postgraduate studies, now with clarity around my interest in finance, but one time while waiting for a visa, it was not a recommendation I would give to anyone. It was tough. Expecting distinctions quickly shifted to contentment with just passing, and the billable hour requirements only increased. Then came the global pandemic with its unique challenges for people, and my team's structure changed, giving me increased responsibility.

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## Info Blocks | Profile with advert



**Where did your journey begin and how did you end up where you are today?**

*My journey in corporate finance began when I was accepted into the One Capital JSE Sponsor Graduate Training Programme ("GTP"). The GTP is a 2 year training programme wherein trainees are trained by One Capital's senior executives and benefit from leveraging off of their experience. I have been exposed to the JSE Listings Requirements, Debt Listings Requirements, Companies Act and the Takeover Regulations and I have been involved in various corporate transactions and mergers and acquisitions of JSE listed entities.*

*It was in this programme that my skills in the interpretation and application of the corporate regulatory environment were cultivated and which granted me an opportunity to enrol for and successfully complete the JSE Sponsor Development Programme. This was a very intense 2 year period but it was very rewarding, as upon the completion of the supervisory period at One Capital, I was approved as a JSE Equity Approved Executive. A few years later I was approved and registered by the JSE as a Debt Approved Executive.*

Over the years I have climbed the corporate ladder at One Capital and I am now a Director in the Sponsor Division. This was all possible because I love and I am passionate about the work that we do and I greatly enjoy the people that I work with and the work culture.

**W**hich deal challenged you the most and why?

I was a member of the corporate advisory team that advised Capitalworks on the take private and delisting of Peregrine Holdings Limited from the JSE and A2X by way of a concurrent scheme of arrangement and general offer. This deal was challenging as it was announced and implemented during the nationwide lockdown instituted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Having to navigate the terrain of various regulators in several jurisdictions and working remotely was challenging. However, we managed to overcome these obstacles and successfully implemented the transaction within record time. The transaction won the DealMakers 2020 Private Equity Deal of the Year.

WHAT IS YOUR GO-TO POWER SONG?

The song that really gets me motivated and amped up, when at work or in the gym is "Work" by Britney Spears. I like listening to this song as the lyrics are factual in that if you want something in life, you need to work for it and put in the necessary dedication required to be successful. Nothing in life comes for free. One needs to set goals of what you want to achieve and then you need to put your head down and do all that is required to attain it.

## WHAT IS AT THE TOP OF YOUR BUCKET LIST?

Visit New York and see a Broadway show, in particular *Les Miserable*.

*What advice would you give to young women*

**hoping to succeed in your field?**  
You can do anything that you put your mind to.  
Do not focus on the difficulties, just remain  
steadfast and you can accomplish anything.



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## Wilmarie Strachan

Executive | Technology, Media and Telecommunications

Wilmarie Strachan is an Executive in EN'Safrica's technology, media and telecommunications ("TMT") team. She specialises in information and communications technology ("ICT") law, including the related technical, commercial compliance, business, customer and performance management aspects. She has a special interest in telecommunications, internet and e-commerce law, data privacy, as well as software and application ("app") development.

Wilmary was previously the head of legal services at a major South African telecommunications company, where she was in charge of the legal, regulatory and compliance division. This experience provided Wilmary with an excellent understanding and deep knowledge of the technology, internet and telecommunications legislative and regulatory environment. This includes an in-depth knowledge of industry-specific legislation and codes, as well as legislation with a more operational impact on businesses, enabling her to provide clients with holistic, practical advice.

Wilmari has acted for various large listed companies in the IT industry and retail sector, and has significant experience in negotiating and drafting complex information and communications technology agreements, including sub-marine cable landing and partnership agreements, international capacity agreements, roaming and managed

network agreements, facilities leasing agreements, peering agreements, cloud computing agreements and outsourcing agreements. Wilmari had also acted in various telecommunication disputes, including complex disputes relating to call termination and transit charges, number porting and facilities leasing.

In addition, Wilmar has advised on the structuring of various M&A transactions in the telecommunications industry, with emphasis on ensuring the expeditious transfer of business, while taking into account the relevant regulatory and licensing conditions.

She has been involved in ground-breaking innovation and technology advancements in the South African internet market, and has served on the management committee of the Internet Service Providers Association of South Africa.

She has assisted various corporates and multinational entities to take their business on-line, has published various articles on e-commerce and created a compliance toolkit for e-commerce platforms.

She has presented various seminars, workshop and training on data privacy, access and security

Wilmari has implemented numerous compliance programmes and conducted compliance audits for clients. She has drafted various agreements and policies in respect of data privacy, access and security. Wilmari has also written and published articles on data privacy, access and security and appeared on eTV and CNBC and various radio stations and has been quoted in various media publications.

Wilmari is recognised as a leading/  
recommended lawyer by: Who's Who Legal  
2019, 2020, 2021 Data Information and  
Technology – Global Leader (South Africa);  
2022 Telecoms and Media – Global Leader  
(South Africa).

## QUALIFICATIONS

- BProc (LLB) (University of South Africa)
- Globalisation, Lawyers and Emerging Economies (Harvard Law School)
- Developing Personal Agenda (Harvard Law School)
- Five Forces of Excellence for In-house Counsel (Harvard Law School)
- Strategy and Alignment of Internal Service Providers (Harvard Law School)
- Certificate in Finance for Non-financial Managers (University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business)
- Admitted as an attorney and conveyancer of the High Court of South Africa
- Qualified mediator (Family Mediators' Association of the Cape)



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DealMakers WOMEN

# COSTINGS

There are a number of editorial | advertising options available in the 2026 Feature

*All rates excl VAT and agency commission*

Each profile includes the following:

- Photo of the executive
- Company logo
- Content as supplied

All listings are designed using our standard layout and the colours used are pulled from your company logo

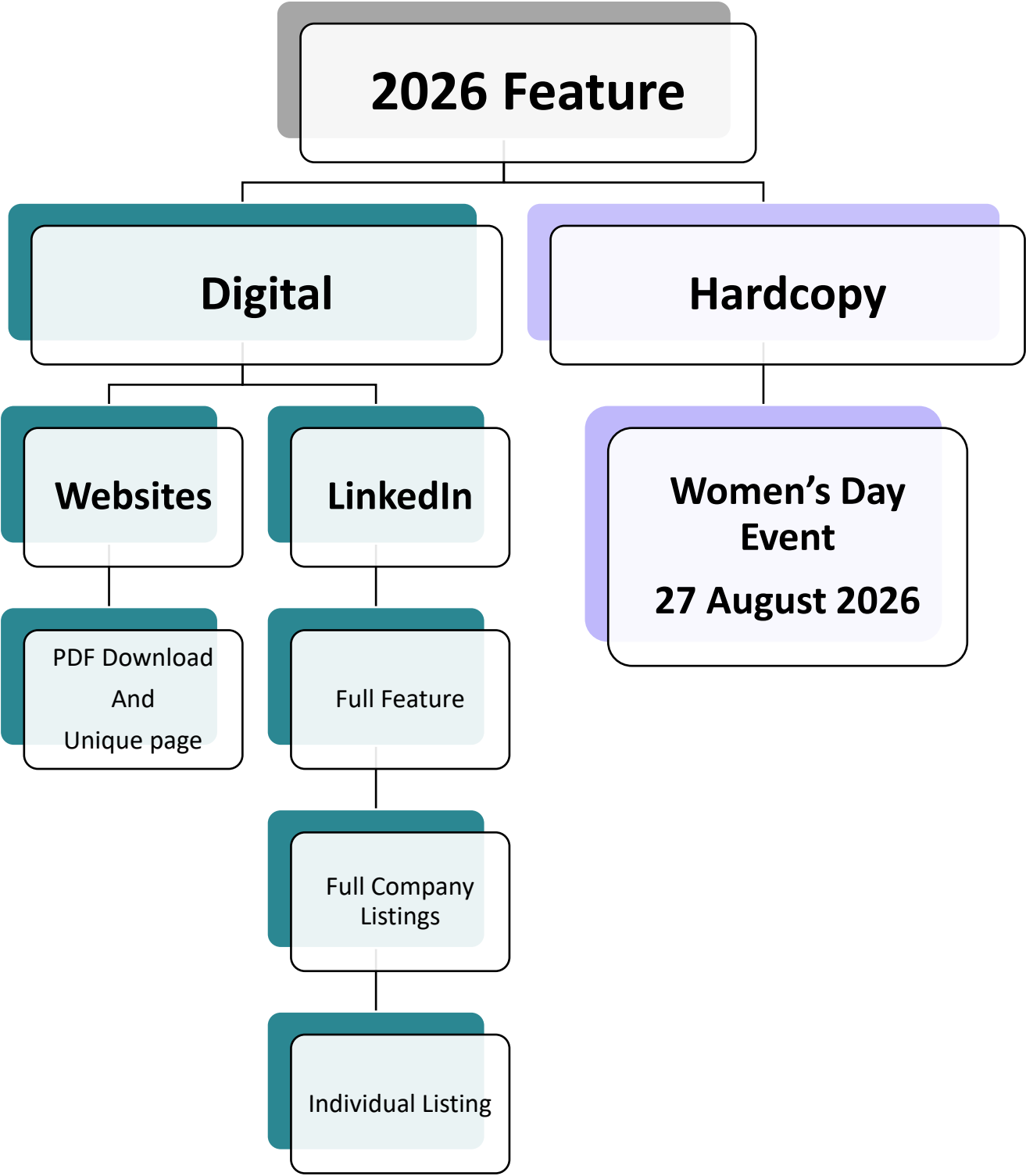
|                 |                                                                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Profile       | R4,300                                                                |
| 2 – 10 Profiles | R4,300 for the first listing plus R1,650 for every additional listing |
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*Add a half page advert to a listing and convert it from a full page to a double page listing – listing cost plus R5,000*

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|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Full Page Inside Front Cover Advert                          | R15,000           |
| Full Page Advert<br>Discounted rate if you take 11+ profiles | R10,000<br>R7 000 |
| Full Page Outside Back Cover Advert                          | R12,000           |



# FEATURE EXPOSURE







# LINKEDIN POSTS

**DealMakers SA**  
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Take a look at the DealMakers Women of SA's M&A and Financial Markets Industry Feature 2025

View the feature online on our website at <https://lnkd.in/gGufn4Wi>

Special thanks to all the firms that participated in this year's feature:

Absa Group | Baker McKenzie South Africa | Bravura Holdings | Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Inc | Deloitte South Africa | DLA Piper | ENS | Herbert Smith Freehills | Kramer | Investec Corporate and Investment Banking | Nedbank Corporate and Investment Banking | Niche M&A Advisory | Nolands Capital | Norton Rose Fulbright | Poswa Incorporated | PSG Capital | Questco Corporate Advisory | RMB - Rand Merchant Bank | Standard Bank South Africa | Standard Bank Group | Tamela | Vani Chetty | Webber Wentzel

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Women of SA's M&A and Financial Markets Industry

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DealMakers Women of SA's M&A and Financial Markets Industry Feature 2025

Take a look and the Women from RMB - Rand Merchant Bank featured in 2025.  
<https://lnkd.in/dCy9XetT>

- Monica Shupikai Simmons
- Cara Pardini
- Daniela Perros
- Georgie Armstrong
- Masechaba Makhura, CFA
- Nicole Lancefield

#inspirationalwomen #womensday

WF2025 | RMB All • 8 pages

**PROFILE**

**Q&A**

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DealMakers Women of SA's M&A and Financial Markets Industry Feature 2025

Take a look and the Women from Nedbank Corporate and Investment Banking featured in 2025.  
<https://lnkd.in/d8XpqgFq>

- Puleng Khunou
- Vanessa Murray
- Trishna Sewnarain
- Apelele Fundama
- Pindiwe Letlape
- Sandi Mda (née Macingwane)
- Melanie Steen CA(SA), CFA
- Nolukhanyo Mqhayi
- Raginee Naidoo
- Jadee Coetzee

#inspirationalwomen #womensday

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**Puleng Khunou**  
Executive Director, Credit Coverage

We don't hire women.