



Finance Transformation in South African Mining: Equally vital as the AI revolution

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Has the African mining sector reached the heightened levels of financial transformation as its global peers?¹ As conversations among the sector's leaders centre around disruptive technologies and AI-powered tools, we cannot forget the vital importance of modernising finance functions alongside these new developments.

This year's Mining Indaba had a key focus on the former – with a pan-African and highly technological focus² – but the sheer number of discussions on the ground made it clear that financial transformation was still recognised as a key agenda point. Finance transformation refers to the reimagining and modernisation of finance functions through digital technologies, streamlined processes and strategic insights to evolve financial and management reporting, enterprise operating models and innovating on finance tech and data solutions. This holistic approach is required to truly take advantage of disruptive technologies – especially in the local mining industry where the hunger to evolve is rapidly growing.

For example, while many laud AI technologies in the safety and engineering spaces for their ability to improve efficiency and save costs, their value depends on how effectively they are implemented and integrated into existing systems.

In Deloitte's recent *Tracking the Trends 2026* report³, our research showed that volumes of operational data in the mining sector are increasing.

However, productivity improvements are only possible if that data is managed and utilised to achieve the organisation's goals.

For many mining companies, equipment-specific platforms or isolated dashboards often silo data, preventing leaders from gaining a holistic picture. As the report states:

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Even when efficiency gains are achieved, they often fail to translate into financial outcomes... Unlocking additional benefits through smart operations could require effective integration layers, such as private 4G and 5G networks, data lakes, edge-based analytics and cloud-native platforms, which can ingest large, diverse data sets and make them available for AI-driven insights.

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¹ Mining Indaba 2026: Baletsema Holdings on how technology is reshaping mining's future
² Mining Indaba 2026: A defining year for African industrial growth
³ Deloitte Finance Trends

By adopting modern finance technologies and processes, firms can automate regulatory reporting, such as submissions to the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) compliance. This reduces manual errors, ensures timely compliance and allows finance teams to focus on strategic initiatives.

Real-time cost tracking and control is another key benefit. With cloud-based finance tools, mining companies can monitor operational costs across multiple sites, quickly identify overruns and respond proactively to market volatility. Enhanced cash flow forecasting (powered by predictive analytics) enables mines to better manage working capital and plan investments, even in the face of fluctuating commodity prices and operational disruptions like load shedding.

Forward-looking planning (including overall budget, forecasting and life of mine planning) is an essential part of the mining ecosystem regardless of geography. However, as the rest of the world continues to examine the ways in which AI tools can gain traction in financial systems, such as in statistical forecasting and agent-based workflows, its use in Africa's sector is limited⁴. As Deloitte's Finance Trends 2026 report explained, such developments are constrained in the African context by data quality and fragmented systems. Yet there are operations recognising this and implementing solutions.

A major copper producer in the DRC which operates one of the continent's largest copper mining complexes, recently announced an entire revamp of its financial planning and analysis capabilities through a strategic partnership with Deloitte Africa and Anaplan. Implementing an innovative budgeting and forecasting solution, the mine aims to enhance operational efficiency through more agile financial and operational planning.

Such finance system transformation – combined with the implementation of emerging technologies – can also streamline supplier payments and procurement through digital processes, reducing payment cycles, strengthening supplier relationships and minimising fraud risks. Integrated finance systems support comprehensive ESG (environmental, social and governance) and sustainability reporting by consolidating financial and non-financial data, such as water usage and community investments. This transparency is increasingly important for meeting stakeholder expectations and regulatory requirements, and for maintaining a social licence to operate.

Finally, automating internal controls and audit trails through modern enterprise resource planning systems reduces the risk of financial misstatements and supports compliance with Johannesburg Stock Exchange listing requirements. The regulatory bottlenecks frequently discussed at the Mining Indaba can be alleviated by this automation and streamlining compliance processes, centralising data and improving reporting accuracy. In line with more relevant data available on a real-time basis to

decision-makers, digitisation and other technologies bring with them a higher quality of data.

This results in higher assurance on reported financial information and allows timely disclosures in financial markets. This level of assurance obtained in the quality of information used within the financial reporting system can bring a higher level of confidence from analysts and other invested parties allowing for clarity on return on investment decisions and how these can evolve or be realised. Today, the combination of more available, higher-quality data allows assurance providers to utilise technology tools to bring not only assurance but more comprehensive insights. This provides more confidence in reported and forecast information and how change (for instance commodity and diesel prices) can be flexed into reporting systems informing real-time response and management.

However, true digital transformation requires a multi-disciplinary model, with cooperative teams that can work on everything from automation to the newest cloud-solutions, change management to digital upskilling⁵. Significant and meaningful progress requires collaboration.



With the right partners, the mining sector can see improved digital finance, automation and integrated data management in the short-term, overcoming regulatory hurdles, unlocking operational value and sustainable growth. However, a unified commitment to more holistic innovation will be necessary if we want to realise the full benefits of the AI revolution.

⁴ Deloitte Finance Trends

⁵ Nobody Likes a Know-It-All. (Usually.) | Deloitte US

Contributor Profiles:



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Andries van den Berg is the Finance and Performance Leader and Anaplan Alliance Leader for Africa, with over 20 years' experience in corporate performance management and data management technologies. He specialises in helping mining organisations modernise finance functions by integrating planning, data and technology to enable more agile, forward-looking decision-making. He has deep experience designing and implementing budgeting and forecasting solutions that enhance financial visibility, improve planning maturity and support better capital allocation.

Andries focuses on bridging operational data and financial outcomes, leveraging predictive analytics and scenario modelling to enable more informed decision-making and deliver measurable value in complex mining environments.



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