

Hunting Private Equity Opportunities In Stressed Times

May 12, 2020

“There will be a lot of distressed assets coming up for sale,” Olamide “Lami” Ajibesin said.

She advises private and public clients on M&A and PE transactions (including secondaries) and strategic investments in energy (E&P/oil and gas, power), consumer products, industrials, financial services and technology, among other industries.

Among areas hit by the pandemic that could lead to opportunities include aviation, luxury and travel, she said. Ajibesin works with family offices and others, both on the institutional and non-institutional side. The pandemic has raised a few challenges, such as being able to conduct due diligence on investments, although she was already used to working remotely and handling a number of processes via that route.

Private markets investment funds collectively hold a lot “dry powder” – money not yet put to work. At the end of 2018, there was \$2.0 trillion of private equity spare money globally (source: Bain & Co, 2019 report). Fast forward to the Coronavirus blighted spring of 2020, and a lot of that money could be put to work. But investors are not going to be in a hurry, given uncertainties for some time to come, said Ajibesin. “The mood of investors now is more introspective....people are taking their time,” she said.

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