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### POLICY ANALYSIS

## Navigating Structural Constraints

*A Policy Analysis of Enterprise Governance and Competitiveness in Ghana (2000–2026)*

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### ABSTRACT

Persistent structural constraints, including limited access to finance, infrastructural deficits, and regulatory complexities, continue to impede enterprise competitiveness in many African economies. The governance frameworks adopted by firms to navigate this challenging environment are critical yet underexplored in policy design. This analysis aims to evaluate the efficacy of national enterprise support policies in addressing structural barriers to competitiveness, with a focus on governance adaptations. It seeks to identify policy gaps and propose mechanisms to enhance firm-level resilience and growth. The study employs a mixed-methods policy analysis, synthesising longitudinal data from national business climate surveys, archival policy documents, and in-depth interviews with enterprise owners, policymakers, and industry association representatives. A predominant theme identified is the reactive and informal nature of governance adaptations, where over 60% of surveyed small and medium-sized enterprises have developed parallel, unofficial systems to circumvent bureaucratic hurdles. This significantly distorts the intended outcomes of formal support programmes. Current enterprise policy is misaligned with the on-the-ground governance strategies firms use to survive, creating a gap between formal institutional support and informal entrepreneurial practice. Policymakers should integrate formal recognition of adaptive governance practices into regulatory design, pilot co-created compliance frameworks, and establish public-private dialogue platforms specifically focused on regulatory simplification. enterprise governance, structural constraints, competitiveness, policy analysis, business environment, regulatory reform This paper provides a novel analysis of the disjuncture between formal enterprise policy and the informal governance adaptations of firms, introducing the concept of 'circumventive governance' as a critical mechanism for survival in constrained environments.

**Keywords:** *Policy Analysis, Enterprise Governance, Competitiveness, Sub-Saharan Africa, Structural Adjustment*

#### Article Highlights

- Identifies a critical gap between formal institutional support and informal entrepreneurial practice.
- Proposes formal recognition of adaptive 'circumventive governance' strategies in policy design.
- Advocates for co-created compliance frameworks and regulatory simplification platforms.

#### Core Policy Disjuncture

Current enterprise policy is misaligned with the on-the-ground governance strategies firms use to survive structural constraints.

*This analysis introduces the concept of 'circumventive governance' as a critical survival mechanism.*



## ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

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