



Enhancing Business Linkages between Large Firms and South African SMEs: A Policy Analysis

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Published: 26 October 2010 | **Received:** 14 July 2010 | **Accepted:** 15 September 2010

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18912857](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18912857)

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Abstract

South African small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often struggle to penetrate large firms' supply chains, hindering their growth and development. The study employs a comprehensive literature review and expert interviews to analyse existing policies and practices in South Africa, identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement. A key finding is the significant lack of formal procurement processes that specifically target SMEs within large firms' supply chains, which represents a critical barrier to collaboration. The analysis concludes with recommendations for policy makers on how to address these challenges by implementing targeted incentives and standardised reporting mechanisms for supplier engagement. Policy recommendations include the establishment of a dedicated procurement unit within large firms to facilitate SME participation, alongside the introduction of standardised reporting tools for tracking supplier performance.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, Supply Chain Management, Porter's Five Forces, Cluster Analysis, Public-Private Partnerships, Network Theory, Innovation Diffusion*

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