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## **Exploring stakeholder's understanding of procurement performance expectations gap in public works contracts in Uganda's district local governments: a qualitative analysis of results**

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**Abstract:** Studies on performance expectations gaps is sparse and incomplete, and yet it is becoming an increasing concern in public procurement. This study borrowed the concept of expectations gap from auditing, accounting and focused on ‘how do the different stakeholders with different needs, interests and expectations, perceive and interpret the procurement performance expectations gap (PPEG) in roadworks contracts’. Thirty-three key informants in two categories of ‘technical personnel’ and ‘road users’ were selected using purposive sampling from the four regions of Uganda. Semi-structured interview guides were used to gain insight into understanding PPEG, and data was subjected to rigorous statistical analysis using ATLAS.ti version 22 software. Respondents understood PPEG to mean general lapse of procurement performance failure punctuated with growing levels of performance dissatisfaction, narrowness of the community access roads, delayed completion of road network and inconsistency in the quality of completed works, with three emerging themes: 1) laxity in performance efficiency; 2) laxity in performance effectiveness; 3) low level of community satisfaction. The implications of this study shows that whereas the technical personnel’s perception that the road user’s opinions might be grossly wrong, they must be respected in order to have a holistic community roadworks acceptance and support.

**Keywords:** procurement performance expectations gap; PPEG; community access roadworks; technical personnel; road users; ATLAS.ti; ‘arm-chair’ auditors.

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## **1 Introduction**

There are varying opinions of how the procurement performance expectations gaps (PPEG) is interpreted by various stakeholders, basing on the glaring performance gaps being reported in the public procurement field regularly (PPDA, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017). These variations in opinions have attracted different interpretations from a stakeholder's perspective. This paper presents a detailed qualitative analysis of findings from key informant interviews and their implications to the meaning of public procurement performance expectations gap. This paper gives a detailed account in which various officials from within (technical personnel) and unofficial ('arm-chair' auditors who are road users in this study) interpret informal accounts, accountings, and performance measures affecting the management of periodic road maintenance of

community roadworks contract projects in DLGs in Uganda. It is based on the researchers view of exploring perceptions and expectations, which are inherently subjective out there, in terms of accommodating the different interpretations of performance expectations as measured based on different perspectives and personal impressions, by both technical personnel and road users (who play the role of ‘arm-chair’ auditors) on accounts of expenditures, efficiency, effectiveness and actions of technical personnel of DLGs while executing different community roadworks projects in Uganda.

There is evidence that stakeholder expectations have not been embraced in executing the procurement process holistically leading to disagreements/dissatisfaction of the assessment of the quality of procurement outcome. Stakeholders, in the interest of promoting accountability would be free to ask questions, demand answers, debate those answers and make sound judgement on the state of procurement performance in the country. Unfortunately, this is not the case, leading to stakeholder dissatisfaction, thus leading to expectations gap. Deciding who/which group to consider as stakeholders and at what stage to implement these expectations is a challenging task, which expectations to consider, from which group of stakeholders to consider and how to respond to these expectations in the most appropriate way has been a great challenge in public procurement management. This thus causes information asymmetry (not having accurate and detailed information about procurement performance) which further create disharmony in managing stakeholder expectations. The major areas of confusion and conflict that have contributed to the expectation gap include the failure to quantitatively interpret works contracts requirements, non-disclosure of the procurement sums to stakeholders, the role of stakeholders not being explicitly spelt out in the PPDA law, collusion among the service providers, conflict of interest, influence peddling and corruption, which are key issues generating interest not only to the accounting but also the procurement professionals. What procurement actors do see and describe as being ‘good’ is seen otherwise (unrealistic) by other stakeholders (the ‘arm-chair’ auditors), leading to an expectations gap.

In Uganda, A huge range of services, supplies and facilities, and infrastructure development is procured on a competitive tendering basis following central and local government procurement regulations. The tendering is usually undertaken on a competitive basis, and for specialist services or supplies this may also be on a selected or pre-qualified basis. Organisations may use traditional tendering or contracting approaches to their procurement, or new approaches such as partnerships, joint ventures and alliances/sub-contracting. The tendering and procurement processes must be robust and fair enough to satisfy all the parties involved in the process, such as contactors, funders, the community, consultants and purchasers. The processes must also meet expected good practice for procurement in the public sector. Once such projects are completed, site handover and commissioning is done in the presence of stakeholders. It is at this point that a number of issues are raised by different stakeholders in respect of the status of the completed projects. Such issues have brought a lot of dissatisfaction amongst stakeholders mainly being attributed to quality and delivery concerns. This has created a great debate as to whether the procurement projects accountability matches the procurement outcome, and brought into the limelight the weakness of financial accountability and lack of transparency and accountability at the DLG level, which creates a performance gap Adams and Evans (2004) reported, arising from over emphasis on the validity of performance at the expense of addressing completeness and credibility, both of which require stakeholder involvement

### *1.1 Situation analysis of performance expectations gap in developing countries*

Public procurement process cycle has a variety of stakeholders involved and all these do have varying expectations in terms of procurement outcome. Public organisation's performance management can never be complete without the involvement of stakeholders. There is evidence that seem to suggest that most stakeholders do not have sufficient knowledge about stakeholders' responsibilities and this has resulted in what is known as the stakeholder's expectations gap. Stakeholders have become an indispensable part of the entire procurement cycle in today's world and it is receiving great consideration and entrenchment in procurement literature. A close analysis of the audit reports conducted by PPDA in the recent years suggest that stakeholders have been left out in the attainment of the PDEs intended objectives, and this is causing a lot of discomfort in their minds, with varying expectations. There is therefore difference in expectations in respect of what the key PDEs do and what the general public with various stakeholders expect as reflected in the procurement audit reports in recent years (PPDA, 2007, 2012, 2013, 2016).

Contentious issues ranging from the level of procurement performance, how the procurement officers perform their activities, their spending and expenditure patterns on roadworks projects, the effectiveness of procurement engagements, as well as their ability and influence have been pointed out as leading causes of varying stakeholder expectations, and any performance short of this perceived expectation would be seen as substandard performance (Gbadago, 2015). This situation that brings out the wrong perceptions of the stakeholders about their responsibilities creates what has been described as stakeholders' expectations gap. According to Deegan and Rankin (1999) also quoted by Brennan (2006), an expectations gap is defined as "the result of the difference in opinion or perceptions between two or more groups". Porter (1993) emphasises that an expectations gap has two elements: a reasonableness gap (i.e., the gap between what is expected and what can reasonably be expected to accomplish); and a performance gap (i.e., the gap between what can reasonably be expected and perceived actual achievements). In the context of procurement management, the concept will be applied in relation to the view that what stakeholders actually see and reported to have been achieved is different from what is actually reported (inaccurate/exaggerated). The existence of a gap between what procurement actors are legally required to do and what they actually do as regarded by the general public is one that creates the problem.

In Uganda, the public procurement system has undergone a number of major developments, including a complete decentralisation of the procurement process to the level of empowering lower public institutions (PPDA and IGG, 2006; PPDA and Reev Consult International, 2008). The laws, among other things address ethical code of conduct with a view of looking for a tangible solution of streamlining the efficiency and effectiveness, but cases of corruption, mismanagement, inefficiency and mis-procurement are on the increase (Ntayi et al., 2013; NewVision, 2014; Mbago et al., 2016). Unlike In other developed world where performance expectations are no longer a major issue causing a serious expectations gap, the Ugandan situation is very different. Views and opinions expressed in various reports on procurement performance have left a lot to be desired. In Uganda, the scope of procurement affects a wide variety of people (stakeholders) who have different expectations. The expectations of one group of stakeholders say Donors and government might be different from those of the community where the projects are being implemented, and these might also be different from other

key beneficiaries who are keenly monitoring the project on a day-to-day basis. This causes an expectations gap.

### *1.2 Research question*

We were guided by the research question: How do the different stakeholders with their different interests, perceive the performance expectations gap in roadworks contracts in DLGs in Uganda? Is there an overlap? how to they integrate at the end? And most importantly how is the understanding of performance expectations gap in DLGs in relation to the different stakeholder interests and expectations?

## **2 The research design and methodology**

The stakeholders were categorised into two major groups: the ‘technical personnel’ and the ‘road users’. The ‘technical personnel’ and the ‘road users’ were selected as respondents, with technical explanations provided for each stakeholder group to avoid overlap. Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA), uses the term ‘road users’ to refer to any person who uses the road on a regular basis. Uganda Road Fund (URF) describes a road user as a set comprising pedestrians, cyclists, passengers, motorcar drivers, bus drivers, taxi drivers, and truck drivers (CrossRoads, 2015; URF, 2017, 2018). For purposes of consistency and access to respondents, in this study, a ‘road user’ refers to one who is an elected people’s representative of the community where the road is found, he uses it and also in a leadership position (which comes with additional value) of being able to understand how the facility comes into place. He has the best interest in sustaining the facility and can speak about it because it’s part of his political social contract with the people. He is considered reliable and accessible and above all a resident and doesn’t directly engage in working on the roads but have had a chance to represent their communities as councillors, serve on DLG Council Committee and participate in the drafting and passing of district budgets for their community roadworks, and mandated to monitor and supervise what the technical personnel do, and report back to the community. This category of road users, who are perceived to be ‘arm-chair’ auditors, are not only curious but also pay attention to the actual cost of maintaining and replacing these community roadworks (Walter, 1968), because they are perceived to have power and authority to influence what the technical personnel do at DLGs and cause improvements in the areas that matter most to the rest of road users (Transport Focus, 2018). The ‘arm-chair auditors’ are considered people with a common sense and an exposed view of what goes on in the local community, capable of evaluating and interpreting, particular aspects of CARs, based on observation and usage spending records and expenditures of their DLGs. In the context of this study, a community access road (CAR) includes a district feeder road and community roads being worked on by the new set of equipment, characterised by unpaved roads that undergoes regular periodic maintenance, makes use of community materials (gravel) in paving the road, mostly use government own-equipment – methods of maintenance including use of road gangs, follows customised road construction standards subject to availability of resources, minimal road safety features added and minimal traffic mostly pedestrians and boda-bodas.

**Table 1** Stakeholder categorisation and sampling frame

| <i>Category</i>                     | <i>Technical personnel</i>                 |                  | <i>Road user</i>                                   |                  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------|
|                                     | <i>Details</i>                             | <i>Sub total</i> | <i>Details</i>                                     | <i>Sub total</i> |
| <i>Respondents in each category</i> | District engineer                          | 04               | Chairperson works committee                        | 01               |
|                                     | Acting district engineer                   | 11               | Road overseer                                      | 01               |
|                                     | Senior/assistant engineering officer       | 04               | Secretary for works                                | 02               |
|                                     | Roadworks inspector                        | 01               | Chief administrative officer                       | 01               |
|                                     | Senior/civil engineer                      | 03               | Community road inspector                           | 01               |
|                                     | Superintendent of works                    | 03               | Chairperson works and technical services committee | 01               |
|                                     | Total respondents' saturation per category |                  | 26                                                 |                  |

### 2.1 Sampling frame

The sampling frame consisted of 33 Key informants in the two categories of technical personnel and road users. Technical personnel included district engineer (DE), asst. DE, engineering officers, civil engineers and superintendent of works. Road users included chief administrative officers, chairpersons of works committees of council, secretary works committee (and technical services) at DLG council, community road overseers.

### 2.2 Characteristics of qualitative respondents

Table 2 shows the characteristics of the key informant and their experience in the field of feeder roads and community access roadworks (CARs). Basing on the years these interviewees have spent either monitoring and supervising CARs and implementing CARs at DLGs, they can be considered to have sufficient experience to inform the understanding of the issues related to funding, implementing, monitoring and supervision of CARs in Uganda's DLGs and the extent of community involvement and empowerment during implementation of the roadworks projects.

### 2.3 Data collection and analysis

Semi-structured interviews were used to solicit views amongst key informants to collect qualitative data. In order to gain insight into their understanding and meaning, the interpretivist/subjectivist approach was used to allow the study to examine contextual factors that influence, determine and affect the interpretations of PPEG based on the respondent's experiences (Davies and White, 2012). The analytical approach focused on qualitative aspect of the study to determine in depth inquiry into the existing situation or

phenomenon under study based on facts on ground (Kumar et al., 2005). With the permission of the respondents, all the interviews were audio recorded. Each of them lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour, Interview data was subjected to rigorous statistical analysis using Susanne (2020) ATLAS.ti version 22 software guidelines. Data was analysed to get emerging themes and sub-themes. The interviewee audio files were imported into the software, grouped into four according to the regional collection to make meanings of the audio transcriptions. From the transcriptions, several codes were created during the transcriptions, sub grouped according to the similarity of the codes and attached meanings from the preliminary transcriptions.

**Table 2** The profile of the key interviewees

| <i>Interviewee</i> | <i>Respondent station</i> | <i>Position of respondent</i>    | <i>Educational qualification</i> | <i>Interviewee category</i> | <i>Experience in handling CARs at DLGs</i> | <i>Overall experience in roadworks sector</i> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| D71                | Jinja                     | DE                               | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D72                | Kamuli                    | Chairperson, Works committee     | Diploma                          | Road user                   | 6                                          | Teacher                                       |
| D18                | Lwengo                    | Ag. DE                           | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D4                 | Bukomansimbi              | Ag. DE                           | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 6                                          | 6                                             |
| D12                | Kasese                    | DE                               | Diploma                          | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D55                | Luuka                     | DE                               | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 1                                          | 9                                             |
| D54                | Luuka                     | Civil engineer                   | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 3                                          | 3                                             |
| D52                | Luuka                     | Community road inspector         | Bachelors                        | Road user                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D7                 | Gomba                     | Ag. DE                           | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D77                | Soroti1                   | Road overseer                    | Diploma                          | Road user                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D78                | Soroti2                   | Ag. DE                           | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D69                | Sembabule                 | Asst. engineering officer        | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D1                 | Bukomansimbi              | Senior asst. eng. officer/Ag. DE | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 6                                          | 6                                             |
| D3                 | Bukomansimbi              | Senior asst. eng. officer/Ag. DE | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 6                                          | 6                                             |

*Source:* Qualitative primary data



**Table 2** The profile of the key interviewees (continued)

| <i>Interviewee</i> | <i>Respondent station</i> | <i>Position of respondent</i>                      | <i>Educational qualification</i> | <i>Interviewee category</i> | <i>Experience in handling CARs at DLGs</i> | <i>Overall experience in roadworks sector</i> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| D6                 | Butambala                 | Superintendent of works                            | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D11                | Kalungu                   | Ag. DE                                             | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D13                | Kyotera                   | Mechanical Eng./Ag. DE                             | Diploma                          | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D14                | Kyotera                   | Mechanical Eng./Ag. DE                             | Diploma                          | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D16                | Lwengo-                   | Ag. DE                                             | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D17                | Lwengo                    | Ag. DE                                             | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D19                | Lyantonde                 | Ag. DE                                             | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D21                | Mbarara                   | Civil engineer                                     | Diploma                          | Technical                   | 6                                          | 6                                             |
| D22                | Mbarara                   | Road inspector                                     | Diploma                          | Technical                   | 3                                          | 3                                             |
| D23                | Mitooma                   | Superintendent of works                            | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D24                | Mitooma                   | Secretary for works                                | Diploma                          | Road user                   | 6                                          | 6                                             |
| D25                | Ntungamo                  | Senior assistant engineering officer               | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D26                | Rakai                     | Chairperson works and technical services committee | Diploma                          | Road user                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D27                | Rubirizi                  | Ag. DE                                             | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 3                                          | 3                                             |
| D29                | Sembabule                 | Secretary for works                                | Diploma                          | Road user                   | 6                                          | 6                                             |
| D30                | Sheema                    | Chief administrative officer                       | Post graduate degree             | Road user                   | 6                                          | 9                                             |
| D31                | Alebtong-                 | Senior civil engineer                              | Diploma                          | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D32                | Amudat                    | Ag. DE                                             | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 3                                          | 6                                             |

*Source:* Qualitative primary data

**Table 2** The profile of the key interviewees (continued)

| <i>Interviewee</i> | <i>Respondent station</i> | <i>Position of respondent</i> | <i>Educational qualification</i> | <i>Interviewee category</i> | <i>Experience in handling CARs at DLGs</i> | <i>Overall experience in roadworks sector</i> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| D33                | Amuria                    | Ag. DE                        | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D34                | Bukedea                   | Ag DE                         | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D42                | Gulu                      | Superintendent of works       | Bachelors                        | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D43                | Keberamaido               | Asst. eng. officer            | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D49                | Katakwi                   | Asst Eng. Officer             | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 9                                          | 9                                             |
| D53                | Luuka                     | Former DE                     | Post graduate degree             | Technical                   | 1                                          | 9                                             |

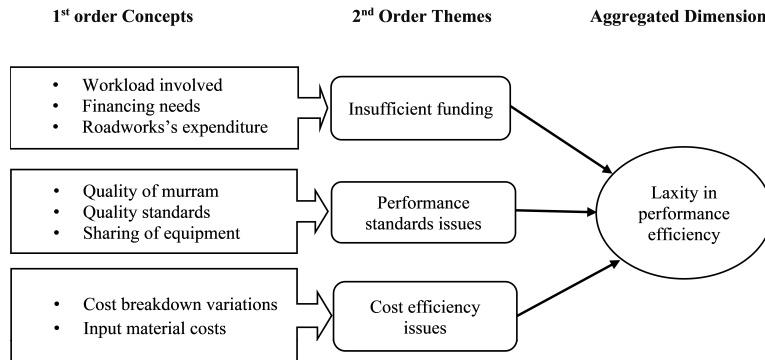
*Source:* Qualitative primary data

### 3 Results from the analysis of qualitative data

The results revealed that interviewees perceived procurement performance expectations gap as general lapse of procurement performance failure punctuated with growing levels of performance dissatisfaction, narrowness of the community access roads, delayed completion of road network and inconsistency in the quality of completed works from their own perspective. On analysing the audio transcripts, three major themes emerged to mean laxity in performance efficiency, laxity in performance effectiveness and low level of community satisfaction. The themes and their sub-themes are discussed below.

#### 3.1 Laxity in performance efficiency

One theme, which subthemes a number of related points, is the concern on laxity in performance efficiency. On analysing the transcripts, it was established that laxity in performance efficiency manifested in the form of the sub-themes themes as illustrated in Figure 1 using (Braun and Clarke, 2006)'s improved version of (Terry et al., 2017) thematic analysis.

**Figure 1** Tree network of laxity in performance efficiency

### 3.1.1 Insufficient funding

In interpreting roadworks expenditure by road users, The DLG has made reference to local citizens acting as, what they call, 'arm-chair auditors', in which the community leaders with a common sense and a view of what goes on basing on activities done by the DLG in the local community should be able to interpret spending records of the DLGs. Local community are evaluating spending of particular aspects of CARs by DLG using their own interpretations. At the moment, it is very hard to assess whether they are getting their assessment of performance efficiency basing on roadworks expenditure quite wrong! The data collected from technical personnel suggest that DLGs don't have reasonable funds to efficiently perform to expectations. During interviews, they said that

"...Roads are underfunded. We receive little funding. The money received from URF doesn't tally with the work load. For instance, in Gomba, Funds are restricted from URF. The funds they send is strictly for maintenance, we are not allowed to do the rehabilitation of roads. It does not mean we don't have the capacity but we are limited by financing. In a whole sub county, we are employing only 7 road gangs for 7-8 months, not even the whole year." (Interviewee D7)

Another respondent, on the account of roadworks expenditure, noted that money is never sufficient for roads and have suspicions that money is being eaten. The interviewee in D27 for example pointed out that,

"...we always breakdown the expenditure for them to understand and appreciate, but it's stuck in their heads that we eat the roads money..." (Interviewee D27)

This therefore implies that the road users do not appreciate breakdown of works expenditures and are deliberately stuck with the opinion of DLGs eating the money, thus creating unnecessary conflict (friction) in different activities. Once this happens, there is greater risk of becoming subjective in their judgements and their opinions will never be trusted.

### 3.1.2 Performance standards

The opinions of technical personnel on road users' perspective indicated that performance standards are lacking in their DLGs. The real cause of community's failure to understand the extent to which the DLGs achieve performance standards emanate from the fact that several community roadworks can be done by different government agencies under different line ministries with differing budgets for instance case D71 intimates that,

“...Communities level of understanding performance standards is not there...for instance the community thinks that if you bring an invoice of 26 million to repair an engine is too costly...yet we are dealing with brand new machines. Secondly, community members are illiterate and pretends as if they know a lot of information...” (Interviewee D71)

In another interaction, an interviewee informed the researcher that,

“...they compare what UNRA has done with the money and what the DLG has done and will keep on complaining because of varying performance standards. They don't differentiate between the different works...once there is a section especially for connecting roads and you work on a section with the best quality and others in a roughly better way, they will compare and complain and say why are you not working on all sections in the same way.” (Interviewee D55)

On the same vein, some respondents outlined the reasons why they were not satisfied with performance standards, thus:

“...We actually not satisfied with the performance standards because of going by what is available because of limited funds... In Mbarara, roadworks standards is always a problem...some of the mitigation measures are that we have tried to tell the political leadership that they should make a contribution to the roads sector, like raising local revenue to add to the road fund, and also think of reducing on their allowances but it's not easy.” (Interviewee D22)

Surprisingly, in defence of declining performance standards, the reactions by the technical personnel attribute this to a number of reasons, for instance they intimate that sharing of equipment with newly created DLGs affects completion of roads on time. According to some technical personnel interviewed, some road users were somewhat happy with the standards attained by the DLG but the challenge was to distinguish what DLG does from those standards attained by UNRA and MOW's road implementation projects in their areas, whose budgets are way bigger than what the DLGs budgets for community roadworks. They, for instance mentioned that:

“...A good percentage of roads are in good motorable standards, but in big DLGs, the machines are being over stretched to loiter in all the town councils and municipalities and new DLGs if some are down thus being stressed...you find some work which is supposed to be for a bull dozer or wheel loader,...the grader is being used for compacting. Despite this ...they are performing to our expectations...” (Interviewee D25)

The quality of murram featured prominently as an indicator of impediment to attainment of performance standards. Several interviewees indicated that:

“...Gravel is sourced from the community and we get it free, we actually used to get it free from well-wishers but beginning this financial year ever since Gomba DLG, started many changes are happening...e.g previously one could get an acre at 1 million shillings but today just a 50X100 costs 4 million with a lot of land wrangles and “bibanja” (small plot) owners cannot give us murrum...” (Interviewee D7)

In defence of this, more technical personnel intimated that:

“...sometimes procurement of murrum complicates the whole process.....for instance in Soroti, when we got involved in procurement at one time, we achieved 1.4 kms of a roads...there was a query and when we followed the law, the murrum procured was always insufficient...so we resorted to negotiations with three different people for costs of ball-pits within a given radius and we get quotations for procurement to decide...” (Interviewee D78).

Others confirmed that money is a major impediment to attainment of performance efficiency which cannot enable them procure sufficient murrum for community road construction. They asserted that:

“... murrum is given freely by the community depending on the nature of the road. For us we tell them we have the machines, and given the fact that your road is slippery, we need murrum and yet we don't have money for murrum. so they willingly offer free murrum...” (Interviewee D13)

“... In hilly areas like Mitooma DLG, is not easy to get murrum even though the area is hilly. they don't have murrum, because in places where there is murrum, people are very close and highly populated. The small land available is already covered by gardens and residential houses and therefore getting murrum is a challenge which affects performance efficiency...” (Interviewee D24)

From all the interviews above it is clear that with even meagre resources left for procurement of murrum, it is no longer going to be an easy game for technical personnel to achieve performance efficiency. First it is becoming scarce due to population explosion in many areas especially hilly, and even when you happen to get it, it becomes dam expensive. The DLGs are now at the mercy of the community to willingly offer free murrum, if they want their road networks to be improved. It is therefore not surprising that the ‘arm-chair’ auditors have a different opinion of their performance ratings.

### *3.1.3 Technical personnel reactions on cost efficiency*

In this particular case, the interviewee explained how escalating roadworks expenditure costs can deter achievement of performance efficiency levels. The interviewee for instance said that, in order to comprehensively cover the issues of interest associated with the perceived correct interpretation of the roadworks expenditure, an interviewee reported that:

“...We compare the amount of fuel disbursed visavis the volume of work done and we make comparisons...however working on swamps takes more fuel than smooth gravelling. We try to minimize costs by getting free murrum...” (Interviewee D13).

Another technical respondent from another region reiterates that,

“...In our area, gravel is very expensive. If it gets into people’s mind that you are buying gravel, the money for the whole road will be on buying murrum. As a strategy for minimizing costs...we preach to people that there is no provision for buying gravel so we go to them and we tell them that getting free murrum is part of community contribution and we tell them if you cannot give us free gravel we shall go and work in other areas...” (Interviewee D21)

Basing on these particular interviewee’s assertions, technical personnel try their best to minimise costs associated with achieving performance efficiency through getting free murrum and reducing on overall costs, but this is not always the case in all areas of operation where in some areas murrum can be got from very far and thus not becoming beneficial to freely get it due to excessive transport costs.

To further counteract on Cost efficiency level, technical personnel organise ‘barazas’ and radio talk-shows where explanations on cost breakdowns are being read out to the listeners in their communities. Through these efforts, they were able to create trust through openness in giving cost breakdowns thus achieving efficiency levels. This is demonstrated by the following explanations where respondents indicated that,

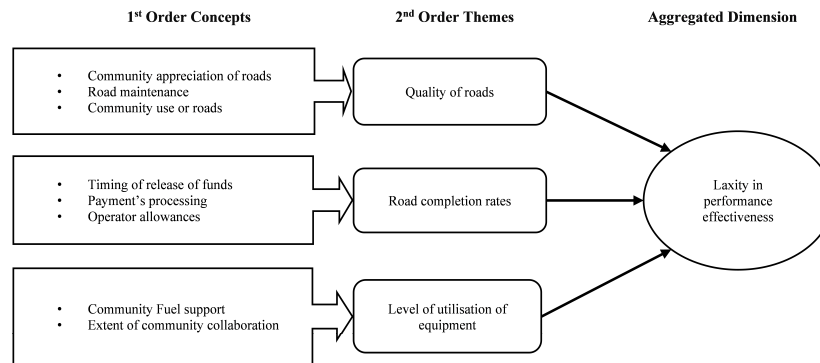
“...our unit rates most especially for Road Gangs are completely different...Where we get half, UNRA doubles... and the community often complains that you District people you are taking our half... because these roads internet and the workers compare the payments. Their rates are higher than ours and yet they do the same activities...” (Interviewee D6)

“...At times, these so called ‘arm-chair’ auditors ask for Bills of Quantities and you give them but they don’t know how to read them. So when they come they start asking and you explain...for example one time ... we quoted so many square meters of a roof, for them when he sees this, they think those are number of iron sheets. We don’t display cost breakdowns we only display the kms and when you do that, we will see how the people start looking for you to give them something something...” (Interviewee D25 and D26)

Overall, findings on comparative interpretations by the different categories of stakeholders on performance efficiency is essentially focused on measures that are used by the Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT) and Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA), as opposed to road users, who are evaluating roadworks expenditures in comparison to the perceived benefits of a particular aspect from their own perspective. Road users have a completely different perspective, based on personal impressions, but also based on the particular interpretations of performance measures and accounts for expenditures. Clearly there are great differences in the ways in which these accounts are interpreted.

### *3.2 Laxity in performance effectiveness*

The second theme that emerged from understanding PPEG is that of laxity in performance effectiveness. In relation to this study, performance effectiveness was generally interpreted to mean getting the right equipment to work on the desired community access roads in time. It was broken down into equipment quality, quality of roads being worked on, timely completion of roads and level of utilisation of this equipment. The illustration showing a network of themes and sub themes that emerged is depicted in Figure 2.

**Figure 2** Tree network of laxity in performance effectiveness

### 3.2.1 Road user assessment of extent of achieving quality of roads

In the context of performance effectiveness, quality of roads to the community meant roads that could be used regardless of the weather conditions, meaning the roads need to be worked on to withstand the inevitable challenging weather conditions, particularly in the hilly areas which are slippery. In their comparison of quality of roads before and after getting machines, the interviewees overwhelmingly supported the view that the quality of roads have improved overtime. One respondent reported that,

“...quality of roads improved because of the new quality equipment. however, the equipment are shared by several DLGs for instance by Gomba and Butambala DLG thus affecting the speed and delivery and completion times...” (Interviewee D6)

In another interview, the roads quality was attributed to the quality of murrum in in their DLG, the views from the community was that the quality of works has improved. The interviewee confirmed that:

“...In Iyantonde DLG, the quality of works has improved, because for each financial year we open around twenty and we maintain around 60-70 km averagely every financial year. we used to just do shaping minus compaction, we now compact...” (Interviewee D19)

The same praises were echoed in Sheema DLG, where on-spot assessment is employed every after a heavy downpour by technical people. The interviewee stressed that,

“...whenever it rains we just pick the RDC and community leaders to go to the roads we have done to check if they are indeed slippery ...for them to see...as a sign of confidence for community appreciation...” (Interviewee D30)

Surprisingly, the technical personnel's assessment to road users' reaction is contrary to their assertion. According to technical personnel, some road users were using other excuses for not improving quality of roads citing a wrong judgement by the community who cannot make a distinction with roads done by different entities. For instance, one respondent said,

“...They are not happy with our roads....that one i know...The community is not satisfied with the quality of roads. In UNRA for instance, mechanizing a road takes 55 million, but for us here we use 2 million so you cannot compare the quality... someone will say but you people are just rolling, not even compacting...yet there they are doing all things... yet there they are doing all things...they will never be happy with our roads...” (Interviewee D6)

Others attributed the deteriorating quality of roads to the community who use them badly with disposal of sugarcane waste and overloading of heavy lorries in the middle of the road. The interviewee noted that,

“...They load their sugarcane in the middle of the roads and after loading for them they don't mind....and overloading affects the quality of roads because the lorries have high axle roads thus keep on breaking the culverts...” (Interviewee D52)

In defence of their bad roads, others had this to say,

“...These are seasonal roads because they are earth roads...we do spot gravelling we select areas in swamps where it is slippery. If i have a budget of 15 millions and politics cannot allow me to work on one road. You need to distribute resources in all the sub counties...” (Interviewee D11)

Finally improving the quality of roads should go along with improving machine spares but this is not the case in some DLGs where the respondent reasoned that,

“...Whereas the state of community roads are tremendously improved, the blades being supplied by MASK are being fabricated, they are no longer metal and thus affecting the quality of the equipment... the blades are very weak...” (Interviewee D32)

The same was highlighted as a performance challenge in a detailed interview where the respondent stressed that,

“...We have been having some challenges like the spare parts e.g blades are no longer good from the supplying agents, and the sheer pin and other small running parts. But whenever there is a serious spare parts need, we put a notice to Bugembe Regional Centre and they forward it to the Service provider and they use the GPS to map where the machines are stationed and they come and service them on time...” (Interviewee D43)

### 3.2.2 Road completion rates: technical personnel's perspectives

Majority of the interviewees alluded that roadworks completion rates on a timely manner is still a big challenge affecting their effectiveness. To them, this is attributed to a number of issues ranging from late release of funds, to sharing of equipment with new DLGs; to a meagre pay to machine operators, thus affecting their morale. The following responses illustrated how DLGs and road users reacted on timely completion of roads;

“Roads are not completed on time because of late release of funds. some roads are more urgent than others so those will be given priority compared to the rest, regardless of in which area they are. the rains disturb our roads a lot and they make unnecessary delays...and the INFMS technology payment system delays processing of payments.” (Interviewee D31)

Another interviewee, in alluding to the failure to complete roadworks on time, pointed out that,



“there is no timely payments for road gangs and also operators. someone spends eight hours and you pay him only 10,000 shillings?... you cannot manage them. You are not providing water, you are not providing food... so it is not possible. Once we pay them 50,000 from the DLG budget, it becomes an audit query yet UNRA pays them a lot of money like 200,000 shillings. This affects timely completion of works because of low morale.” (Interviewee D7)

In related interviews, the respondents re-affirmed what had been said, emphasising that allowances for operators was as a leading cause of performance lapses specifically failure to attain performance effectiveness targets, since they give a low morale to operators to work effectively. One respondent stressed that:

“...some of the challenges faced is the allowances for operators...we pay them 11,000 per day without food and water for a grader operator, which is insufficient. This might accelerate acts of mishandling of machines and siphoning of fuel...” (Interviewee D19)

### *3.2.3 Level of utilisation of equipment*

Qualitative data revealed that performance effectiveness could not be dealt comprehensively with, without looking at level of utilisation of machines, since there were allegations of machines being redundant all the time in most DLGs. One interviewee in case D13 narrated that,

“...machines are well utilised and ever busy especially after release of funds...there are however instances when they are idle as we wait for funds release. They are never redundant...” (Interviewee D13)

In another separate interview that disputed this assertion, the respondent stressed that in case they lacked fuel, they would approach powerful people in the DLG to provide fuel and continue work on the community roads, like in the case of Case 19, where the respondent reported that:

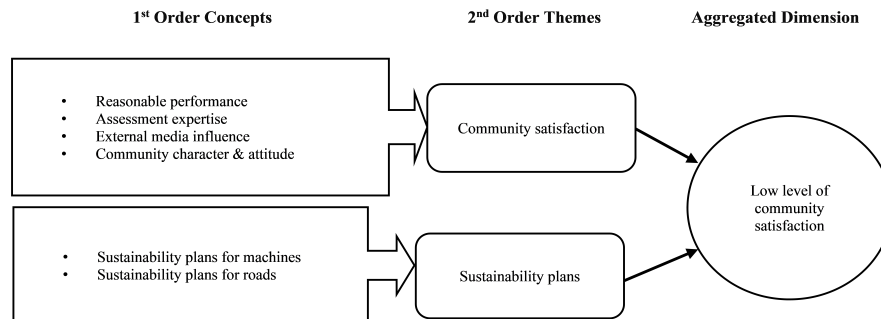
“...some ‘big people’ like politicians in the district buy us fuel through mobilisation and for us we provide machines and they offer fuel, like Hon. Kakooza.” (Interviewee D19)

This case symbolises a symbiotic relationship between DLG and the local community in addressing their needs with collaborative efforts. Such efforts were further strengthened and supported in a continued interview, in which the respondent further reiterated the need for collaboration in the sense that,

“...if they happen to get fuel and gravel, we give them machines and we work on their roads. This also adds on our road network...” (Interviewee D19)

### *3.3 Low level of community satisfaction*

Qualitative results indicated that key informants perceived performance unreasonableness to mean low level of community satisfaction. The main sub theme that emerged from qualitative interviews, relating to comparing levels of community satisfaction were ‘community satisfaction’ and ‘sustainability’, and the opinions of either group of stakeholders are expressed and discussed below as expressed by the first order concepts in Figure 3.

**Figure 3** Tree network of low level of community satisfaction

### 3.3.1 Community satisfaction: What do the technical personnel say?

Qualitative data reveals that the community is keen in establishing the extent to which they are satisfied with the quality of community roadworks when asked what they perceive as being reasonable performance. They compare the quality of roads worked on by their DLGs in the areas, to those worked on by UNRA and other projects and notice a difference in performance. This suggests that the community, regardless of whether they are technical or not, are capable of assessing what was done to the roads and compare to their perceived levels of satisfaction as illustrated by the responses below:

“In Mbarara, when the community feels that what we did may not match with their expectations, their concerns is they want their roads to be motorable, graded, with culverts and yet we may not have the money. So we plan ahead, and may be if we may get the money the next financial year we do the culverts for them...” (Interviewee D21)

Another interviewee blamed the community for using wrong yardstick to measure what they do not know and thus could not technically give an objective and trusted opinion on the level of community satisfaction. This, the interviewee 4 affirms that,

“The relationship with the community is really not good. You cannot be satisfied with what you don’t know...because even if you use one million shillings, someone will shout...will be like that is a lot of money...so that tendency is there that you are not eating money and they are being cheated...when you do something they are never happy they think the road workers we are just eating money and are thieves....they have a feeling they are being cheated. They are never happy because of the media...that we roadworkers are thieves...” (Interviewee D6)

Another interviewee also collaborated the views expressed above on lack of technical expertise to evaluate the roadworks outcome, when he said that,

“...The community is not satisfied at all with roadworks expenditure because it’s not technical and for them they think we are eating money. If you say 7 km with a budget of 30 millions the community thinks we are going to cover the entire road with murrum. So if you don’t cover with murrum, they say that money is not used properly. Even if you explain that money is not enough, they are not satisfied at all. For them they think we are eating money and during baraza, they bring out these complaints all the time...” (Interviewee D26)

Another one blamed the character of the community who indicated that,

“there are all sorts of characters in the community at one time they said we had put ‘kiswa’ soil instead of murrum... I challenged them to put a small portion of their murrum on the road and we compare. The murrum we used was the best and at the end of three months their preferred murrum had been washed away...” (Interviewee D21)

Contrary to the views gathered elsewhere on community roadworks satisfaction, in Mitooma DLG, it was a different case where the community was satisfied, because they see the quality of works. Sometimes, some residents are happy with what their DLGs have managed to do, compared to the situation before they received the machines. This is exemplified in Case D24 extract below, in which an interviewee proclaimed that:

“To a greater extent...when you hear the views and comments from the public, they are really happy with the road conditions. Previously these roads were very bad when we were still in Bushenyi. In the whole FY, we would grade like two roads, because we had two graders for the whole District of Bushenyi, now comprising of seven DLGs of Bushenyi, Bushenyi Municipality, Buhweju, Sheema, Mitooma and Ruburizi DLGs...” (Interviewee D24)

This was also supported by another interviewee who noted that...

“With the new machines, we have had an improvement in the road network we had and what we have worked on... to the level of 30–40%...” (Interviewee D16).

This submission was further supported by the community from the mountainous environments who were praising the DLG for coming to their rescue and their efforts were also appreciated to the effect that they received a present for it. They noted that,

“In Amudat, the community is satisfied with the quality of roadworks expenditure to the effect that the Works Department received an appreciation in form of a certificate recognising the good quality of roads...” (Interviewee D32)

In a nutshell, the community’s level of satisfaction is confused by the different roadworks actors in the DLGs who do the same works from different works departments with differing sources of funds at differing funding and budget rates. The interviewee D33 thus notes that,

“...sometimes you can get a momentary complaint with the local authority may not understand, for example like weather is an uncertainty and nobody can predict it. When we grade today and it rains heavily, because it will be impossible to push someone’s motorcycle or bicycle, we have been passing here now they have messed everything. When the road solidifies and we ram it, they again become happy...so such comments do sometimes come in...” (Interviewee D33)

### *3.3.2 Sustainability plan (of roads and machines)*

The second subtheme under low level of community satisfaction was sustainability. Sustainability was looked into as continuously maintaining the quality of roadworks as well as sustaining the quality of machines after the three-year warranty periods elapse. Qualitative data from Interviewees indicated DLGs needed to ensure and enhance sustainability of the quality of equipment being used, since their warrant period was soon

expiring as well as ensuring the maintenance of quality roads so far achieved. An interviewee in case D43 indicated that sustainability issues needed to be looked into while responding to future minimisation of performance gaps, he affirmed that,

“...in the department of roads, what we have at hand, we solely rely on Uganda Road Fund (URF), because we even get meagre funds of 145 millions for the 130 community access roads...if the URF remits a higher mechanical imprest, perhaps we can save some for sustaining the equipment, otherwise the money we receive now cannot sustain the equipment when the warranty expires...” (Interviewee D43)

One interviewee expressed worry that achieving sustainability will not be easy, when he said that,

“...The money is not enough for maintaining the equipment. The equipment are very durable and will continue using them even after warranty. For minor maintenance, we shall use the mechanical imprest but for major repairs, the plans of supplementing on mechanical imprest from local revenue is made worse because all the local revenue collected is first sent to the ministry... like last year we collected a lot of money and ministry promised that since we had collected a lot of money , ministry of finance was going to send us one million imprest, but it has never reached the account it is now one year.” (Interviewee D42)

Some interviewee expressed some hope in achieving sustainability over time. The interviewee in interviewee D19 affirmed this by saying that,

“... the sustainability of the road and stand of maintenance has changed. the roads cannot take like 3 years before being worked on again. We have been able to open more community access roads...” (Interviewee D19)

From the finding therefore, stakeholders understood PPEG in a different way, in which one category of technical personnel thought the road users were not too technical to understand issues pertaining to performance gaps in relation to community access roadworks. They kept accusing the technical personnel of theft and embezzlement of money meant for roads projects in their community, with some sections of the community becoming appreciative of what has been done and others having some concerns. The technical personnel, on the other hand have defended their performance levels and offered explanations of how they understood performance lapses; and indeed, agreed with the road users that these lapses are there, although they are gradually declining to manageable standards.

#### **4 Discussion of results**

From the above findings, we discuss results by making a comparative analysis of all the sub themes and comparing the interpretations by the different categories of stakeholders as indicated below.

#### 4.1 Understanding procurement performance expectations gap by the different stakeholder groups

In this study, the two categories of stakeholders were 'technical personnel' and 'road users'. Table 3 demonstrates the 'road users' and 'technical personnel' understanding of the procurement performance expectations gap:

**Table 3** Procurement performance expectations gap by stakeholder categories

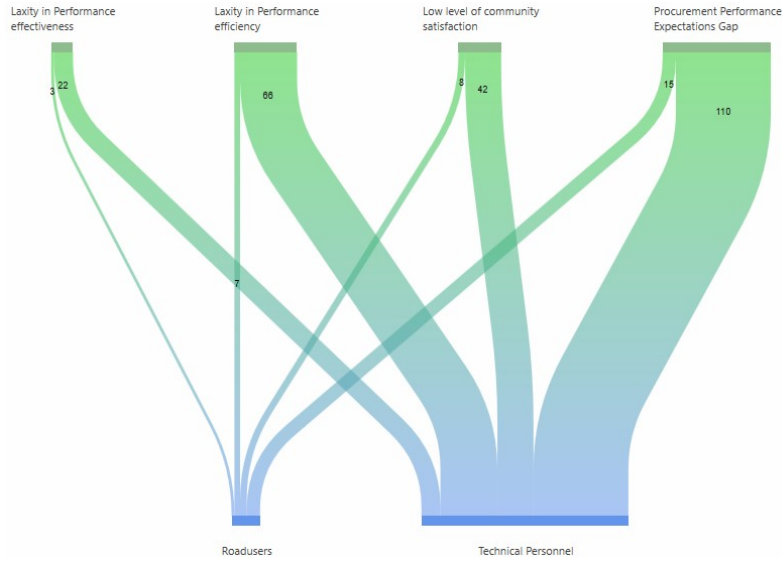
|                                                                    | <i>Road users</i><br><i>Gr = 44; GS = 7</i> |                             | <i>Technical personnel</i><br><i>Gr = 262; GS = 36</i> |                             | <i>Totals</i>   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
|                                                                    | <i>Absolute</i>                             | <i>Column-<br/>relative</i> | <i>Absolute</i>                                        | <i>Column-<br/>relative</i> | <i>Absolute</i> |
| Community satisfaction<br>Gr = 61                                  | 5                                           | 12.82%                      | 36                                                     | 12.86%                      | 41              |
| Performance<br>reasonableness<br>Gr = 5                            | 1                                           | 2.56%                       | 4                                                      | 1.43%                       | 5               |
| Laxity in performance<br>effectiveness<br>Gr = 34; GS = 3          | 3                                           | 7.69%                       | 22                                                     | 7.86%                       | 25              |
| Laxity in performance<br>efficiency<br>Gr = 106; GS = 4            | 7                                           | 17.95%                      | 66                                                     | 23.57%                      | 73              |
| Low level of community<br>satisfaction<br>Gr = 73; GS = 2          | 8                                           | 20.51%                      | 42                                                     | 15.00%                      | 50              |
| Procurement<br>performance expectations<br>gap<br>Gr = 187; GS = 9 | 15                                          | 38.46%                      | 110                                                    | 39.29%                      | 125             |

From Table 3, road users understood PPEG to emanate from low level of community satisfaction of the attainment of performance outcomes. This is closely associated with laxity in attaining performance efficiency, in which the DLG fails to purposely convert the roadworks processes into reasonable roadworks outputs, in their own perspective. In their own understanding, this is arrived at by analysing the quality of murrum used (occasionally calling it 'kiswa' soil; rapid development of potholes, roads being washed away after heavy rains, failure to install road safety measures on new roads among other issues. This accounted for 21%.

The technical personnel, on the other hand, thought that the performance gap is indeed there and to them it is attribute to failure to achieve performance efficiency (24%) and their perception that the community is not satisfied with what they do, thus rating them poorly (15%). The criteria, however, used by the technical personnel differs from that of the road users in the sense that for them they are largely blaming insufficient funding for failure to attain performance efficiency, costly murrum and the community being not appreciative of the level of performance attained so far. by the DLGs. Overall, 38.46% of road users think there is a procurement performance gap and 39.29% of technical personnel think there is indeed a performance gap; which is more or less

similar. It is corresponding Sankey diagram showing the thickness of the edges that correspond to the cell values from Table 3 is shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4** Sankey diagram illustrating how the different stakeholders understood PPEG (see online version for colours)



#### 4.2 Understanding procurement performance expectations gap across regions

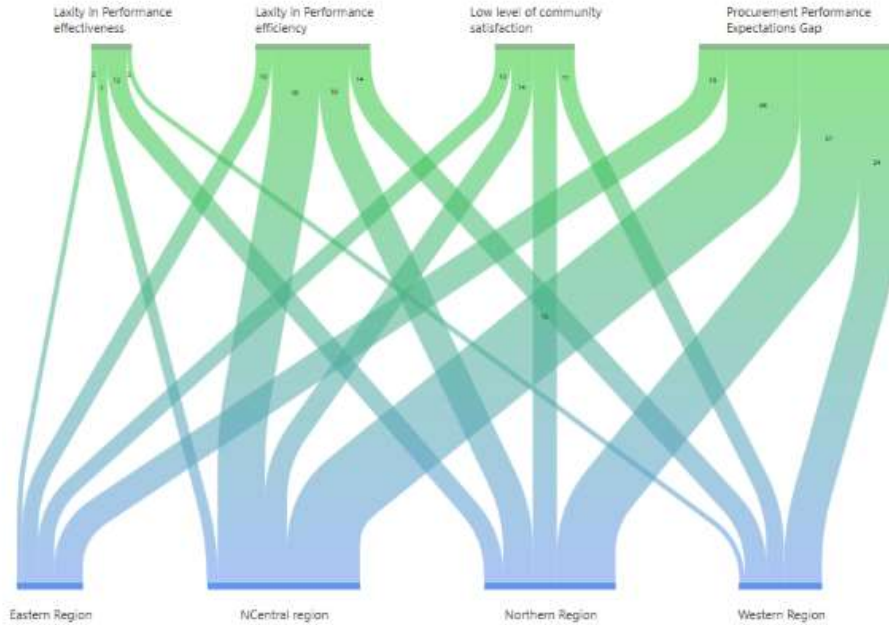
The comparison of issues came from regions where the public performance expectations gap is being experienced and much more felt and specific aspects of the gap in each of the regions. In the eastern region, the issues that contributed to PPEG relate to failure to achieve performance efficiency and the community’s failure to appreciate the roadworks outcomes, with each accounting for 19.23%, as per Table 4. In the same table, and overall, the major issue impacting on the performance gap lies with laxity with attainment of performance efficiency, with Central region (27.27%), Northern region (19.79%) and Western region (22.95%). Overall, Central region experienced the largest performance expectations gap with 41.82% followed with Northern region (38.54%) and the one with experiences the least performance lapse is Eastern with 34.62%, as per Table 4.

The associated Sankey diagram for PPEG across regions is illustrated in Figure 5 reveals the thickness of the edges resembles the cell values from Table 4. From the Sankey diagram in Figure 5, the width is proportional to the quantity represented, in which case the central region takes the lions share in experiencing the performance expectations gap, and its share is majorly explained by laxity in achieving performance efficiency.

**Table 4** Procurement performance expectations gap by regions (see online version for colours)

|                                                              | Eastern Region<br>Gr = 41; GS = 6 |                 | N Central region<br>Gr = 119; GS = 18 |                 | Northern Region<br>Gr = 80; GS = 11 |                 | Western Region<br>Gr = 66; GS = 8 |                 | Totals   |                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|
|                                                              | Absolute                          | Column-relative | Absolute                              | Column-relative | Absolute                            | Column-relative | Absolute                          | Column-relative | Absolute | Column-relative |
| Community satisfaction<br>Gr = 61                            | 9                                 | 17.31%          | 12                                    | 10.91%          | 13                                  | 13.54%          | 7                                 | 11.47%          | 41       |                 |
| Performance reasonableness<br>Gr = 5                         | 2                                 | 3.85%           | 1                                     | 0.91%           | 0                                   | 0.00%           | 2                                 | 3.28%           | 5        |                 |
| Laxity in performance effectiveness<br>Gr = 34; GS = 3       | 3                                 | 5.77%           | 7                                     | 6.36%           | 12                                  | 12.50%          | 3                                 | 4.92%           | 25       |                 |
| Laxity in performance efficiency<br>Gr = 106; GS = 4         | 10                                | 19.23%          | 30                                    | 27.27%          | 19                                  | 19.79%          | 14                                | 22.95%          | 73       |                 |
| Low level of community satisfaction<br>Gr = 73; GS = 2       | 10                                | 19.23%          | 14                                    | 12.73%          | 15                                  | 15.63%          | 11                                | 18.03%          | 50       |                 |
| Procurement performance expectations gap<br>Gr = 187; GS = 9 | 18                                | 34.62%          | 46                                    | 41.82%          | 37                                  | 38.54%          | 24                                | 39.34%          | 125      |                 |
| Totals                                                       | 52                                | 100.00%         | 110                                   | 100.00%         | 96                                  | 100.00%         | 61                                | 100.00%         | 319      |                 |

**Figure 5** Sankey diagram illustrating the causes of PPEG across the different regions of Uganda (see online version for colours)



From Figure 5, the gap manifests in form of laxity in performance efficiency and low level of community satisfaction. In both the central and western regions, the gap manifests in the form of laxity in performance efficiency. In the northern region, however, the performance gap mostly manifests in the form of laxity in attaining performance effectiveness, whereas, overall, the performance gap is largely attributed to laxity in performance efficiency. This is also explained by the bold green band in the Sankey diagram in Figure 5. This is also demonstrated by the relative and absolute frequencies in the illustrations in Figure 5.

Technical respondents also revealed that they rarely exhibit break-down structures of associated costs of the roadworks projects to the beneficiaries. This is partly attributed to the fact that the beneficiaries do not understand how to interpret these cost breakdowns and therefore there is no need to waste time. On a few occasions, the community have seen the operators siphoning fuel from this roadworks equipment and witnessed the way they community roadworks are undertaken. DLGs have found it difficult to convince the beneficiaries of the actual costs of the projects and are never convinced such projects take up such huge sums. This therefore implies that the community does not witness and appreciate breakdown of works expenditures and are thus deliberately stuck with the opinion of DLGs eating the money, (which is repetitively reported in the media too) thus creating unnecessary conflict (friction) in different activities. Once this happens, there is greater risk of becoming subjective in their judgements and their opinions will never be trusted. The real cause of community's failure to understand the extent to which the DLGs achieve performance standards emanate from the fact that several community roadworks can be done by different sectors under different line ministries with different



differing budgets. the quality of murrum featured prominently as an indicator of failure for attainment of performance efficiency, with some respondents calling it 'kiswa' soil, as opposed to the use of laboratory tested murrum. This failure to achieve cost efficiency levels, is consistent with our earlier findings (Kalinzi et al., 2018). The same findings are supported by Byaruhanga and Basheka (2017), who reported that poor quality roads have continued to be the norm in Uganda, with the practitioners accusing one another for poor performance. He warned, that poor quality road works, delayed completion of road projects and cost overruns on road infra-structure projects in Uganda continue to elude the project implementers. This study was however done on national roads projects, as opposed to this on community roadworks projects in DLGs in Uganda. These findings are also consistent with those of Aluonzi et al. (2016) from Arua Municipality in the Northern part of Uganda, where this study never sampled; who reported a similar incidence of poor performance, resulting in failure to achieve effective time and cost performance; and those of Onana (2018) in Gabon who reported many cases of construction projects that have failed to meet timely completion, because of financing difficulties.

Similar studies are in line with our findings. In a study on procurement management and performance of construction projects in government-aided secondary schools in Bushenyi district, Memon et al. (2012) quoted by Nshemereirwe (2015) established that even developed countries like Malaysia, where PPPs are commonly used in the road sector, they also still face poor performance, resulting in failure to achieve effective time and cost performance. In a similar report released by UNRA, Luyimbazi (2014) reports that the private sector had achieved levels of efficiency and effectiveness that government cannot achieve, partly because of failing to consider procurement to be a key factor in the effective delivery of these projects requires.

Whereas in the two cases one looked at PPPs in Malaysia and UNRA was comparing level of attainment of effectiveness and efficiency by comparing the private and public sector, our study findings are not different from these and tend to agree. This is in line with our reported findings in a recent conference, in which Kalinzi et al. (2021) reported that roadworks completion on a timely manner is still a big challenge affecting their effectiveness. To them, this is attributed to a number of issues ranging from late release of funds, to sharing of equipment with new DLGs to meagre pay to the machine operators affecting their morale.

## **5 Implications of results for management, practitioners, social and policy improvement**

Understanding stakeholders' reactions and assessments as expressed in the preceding section of data analysis basing on Susanne (2020) approach is so valuable in explaining the different stakeholder groupings visualisation of data and thus poses serious implications across management, practitioners, the community and policy organs responsible for implementing and overseeing successful CARs. Performance gaps are there, and thus the causes of performance gaps need to be looked into. Staffing levels, for instance are very few coupled with insufficient funding and cannot cover the monitoring and supervision of entire works at ago. The DLGs are not having any plans for sustaining machine maintenance after the warranty is over. They claim the mechanical imprest,

besides not being enough cannot cater for both minor and major repairs. The DLGs therefore must find a way of coming up with sustainability plans when the machines warranty is over, either through a higher mechanical imprest from URF or through their internal revenue generation.

In the illustration showing nodes with frequencies, laxity in performance standards received the highest frequencies meaning it was more cited among the issues affecting performance standards. In regard to the perception of the community on whether they are reasonably satisfied with the DLG's performance on community roadworks, it had the highest frequency of 61 meaning majority singled it out as an outstanding issue contributing to performance expectations gap in DLGs.

## **6 Recommendations and way forward**

From the analysis, it is evident that there are varying interpretations on performance measures from the technical personnel and road users. It is therefore recommended that the DLGs the central government has made reference to local citizens acting as, what they call, 'arm-chair auditors', in that, people with a common sense and a view of what goes on in the local community should be able to interpret spending records of the local government. Efforts should therefore be made to bring these arm-chair auditors on board for a wholistic view of CARs projects and improving their acceptance levels.

Regarding comparing open contracting with force on account procedure, most DLGs noted that there is a very big difference, because There is a very big difference and the reason is attributed to the fact that what the DLGs use in terms of funds is close to half of what DLGs used to spend during open contracting, and not looking at profit maximisation. This therefore means that the interest is how long and wide DLGs are covering CARs projects and whether DLGs are achieving the expected quality. This system therefore makes the staff very happy and has created employment for the community where CRAs projects are being implemented. Therefore, PPDA and Force Account are not matching, creating an urgent need to harmonise and make force accounting free, and eliminate procurement of materials to leave out the contracting issue, because being expensive warrants substandard work. The DLGs thinks Force accounting procedures is a good mechanism of road maintenance and we note that they should be fully empowered to handle CARs projects without involving complicated procurement of materials which can be made at their places of work with their engineering expertise.

## **7 Conclusions**

It is evident the community is not satisfied with roadworks expenditure because it is not technical, claiming that that money is not used properly and for them they think DLGs are eating money. It seems that there is a lot of technical detail about the task of local government in road maintenance that is not considered by the so-called arm-chair auditors and residents in particular. Whether they do not know about it or whether they want to make it look as if their community is disadvantaged by the road maintenance agencies is a discussion of subsequent papers but nevertheless, results confirmed the existence of a performance gap, which must be urgently addressed. It is critically

important to involve the community in the roadworks project, which can only be achieved through regular consultation of community leaders to embrace community ownership. This study is among the first of its kind in procurement management and adds a step or earlier studies in auditing in understanding the procurement performance expectations gap. Although the specifics of the 'how narrow' and 'how wide' the gap would be is gradually being addressed in the subsequent papers, a more robust approach needs to be developed in future to have this scale measurement developed, and checked for universal applicability.

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