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Exploring Stakeholder's understanding of procurement performance expectations gap in public works contracts in Uganda's district local governments (DLG): A qualitative Analysis of results

By

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Abstract

There are varying opinions of how the procurement performance expectations gap (PPEG) is interpreted from a stakeholder's perspective. This study borrowed this concept from auditing and marketing fields in order to replicate it in procurement management. The study was guided by the research question: How do the different stakeholders with different needs and interests, perceive the PPEG in roadworks contracts in DLGs in Uganda? The "Technical Personnel" and the "Road users" were selected as respondents, with technical explanations provided for each stakeholder group to avoid overlap. 33 Key informants in two categories of technical personnel and roadusers were selected using purposive sampling, all from the four regions of Uganda. Semi-structured interview guides were used to gain insight into understanding PPEG, interviews were audio recorded, and data was subjected to rigorous statistical analysis using ATLAS.ti software. A set of variables was synthesized and inductively categorized under three emerging themes of (1) laxity in performance efficiency, (2) laxity in performance effectiveness, (3) low level of community satisfaction. This set of themes explain the general laps in procurement performance expectations gap in roadworks contracts in DLGs in Uganda. This study contributes to an improved understanding of PPEG and how they are responsible for creating a performance gap in the stakeholder's own perspective. Results confirmed the existence of a performance gap, that must be urgently addressed.

Keywords: Performance Expectations gap, community access roadworks, Road-user Satisfaction, performance efficiency & effectiveness, ATLAS.ti
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Introduction

There are varying opinions of how the procurement performance expectations gap (PPEG) is interpreted 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. Its based on the researchers view of exploring perceptions and expectations, which are inherently subjective out there. Qualitative data was collected using sequential exploratory approach to provide answers to the main research question. This was based on the fact that the construct is really not very much known and studies on performance expectations gaps are sparse and incomplete. This study borrowed this concept from auditing and marketing fields in order to replicate it in procurement management, since the expectations gap we see in those fields is equally occurring in public procurement field today. The study was guided by the research question:

Research question

We derived the qualitative research question that guided the qualitative study stated as: 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?

The Research Design & Methodology

The stakeholders were categorised into two major groups: The "Technical Personnel" and the "Road users". In the context of this study, technical personnel are those that directly design, enforce and implement the approved roadworks requirements in the DLGs. Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA), uses the term to refer to any person who uses the road on a regular basis. Uganda Road Fund (URF) describes a road user of comprising pedestrians, cyclists, passengers, motorcar drivers, bus drivers, taxi drivers, and truck drivers (CrossRoads, 2015; URF, 2018). In this study, a "road user" refers to one who 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 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 are not only curious but also pay attention to the actual cost of maintaining and replacing (Walter, 1968) these community roadworks, 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 (Transportfocus, 2018).

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, characterized 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 customized road construction standards subject to availability of resources, minimal road safety features added and minimal traffic mostly pedestrians and boda-bodas

The study adopted a sequential exploratory approach which is descriptive in nature, and makes use of a case study of community roadworks projects in Uganda's DLGs to provide answers to the main research question. This is based on the fact that the construct is really not very much known, and thus the desire to derive an up-close and an in-depth understanding of the concept and its varying stakeholder different views in the application of the procurement performance expectations gap within the procurement field.

Sample

the sampling frame consisted of 33 Key informants in the two categories of technical personnel and roadusers. Technical personnel included District Engineer (DE), Asst. DE, Engineering officers, Civil Engineers and Superintendent of works. Roadusers, included Chief Administrative Officers, chairpersons of works committees of Council, Secretary Works Committee (and technical services) at DLG council, Community Road overseers.

Table 1. Stakeholder categorization and sampling frame

Category	Technical Personnel		Road user	
Respondents in each category	**Details**	**Sub total**	**Details**	**Sub total**
	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 &technical services committee	01
Total respondents' saturation per category		**26**		**07**

Characteristics of qualitative respondents

The table below 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.

Table 2: The profile of the key interviewees

Interviewee	Respondent Station	Position of Respondent	Educational Qualification	Interviewee category	Experience in Handling CARs at DLGs	Overall Experience in Roadworks sector
D71	Jinja	DE	Bachelors	Technical	9	9
D72	Kamuli	Chairperson, Works committee	Diploma	Roaduser	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	Roaduser	9	9
D7	Gomba	Ag. DE	Post Graduate Degree	Technical	9	9
D77	Soroti1	Road Overseer	Diploma	Roaduser	9	9
D78	Soroti2	Ag. DE	Bachelor	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
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
D 19	Lyantonde	Ag. DE	Bachelors	Technical	9	9
D21	Mbarara	Civil Engineer	Diploma	Technical	6	6
D22	Mbarara	Road Inspector	Dioloma	Technical	3	3
D23	Mitooma	Superintendent of Works	Bachelors	Technical	9	9
D24	Mitooma-	Secretary for Works	Diploma	Roaduser	6	6
D25	Ntungamo-	Senior Assistant Engineering Officer	Bachelors	Technical	9	9
D26	Rakai -	chairperson works &technical services committee	Diploma	Roaduser	9	9
D27	Rubirizi	Ag. DE	Bachelors	Technical	3	3
D29	Sembabule	Secretary for Works	Diploma	Roaduser	6	6
D30	Sheema	Chief Administrative Officer	Post graduate degree	Roaduser	6	9
D31	Alebtong-	senior civil engineer	Diploma	Technical	9	9
D32	Amudat	Ag. DE	Bachelors	Technical	3	6
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

Data collection

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 interpretivists/subjectivist approach (how the PPEG is interpreted) 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 & 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, Ozdamar, & Chai, 2005).

Data Analysis:

Data was generated and analysed for the perceived understanding of public procurement performance expectations gap in Uganda's DLGs using our sample size selected above. 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 software guidelines. Thereafter, responses generated were analysed to get emerging themes and sub-themes indicated in ATLAs.ti visualization outputs. Qualitative data was coded, and analysed using the latest version of ATLAS.ti software 9 version for advanced qualitative data analysis. The interviewee audio files were imported into the software, grouped into four according to the region of operation and all were coded to make meanings of the audio transcriptions. From the transcriptions, several codes were created during the transcriptions of all the audio recordings and these were further sub grouped according to the similarity of the codes and attached meanings that were generated from the preliminary transcriptions. The codes created were further grouped according to their similarity and meaning towards particular quotations from the interviews into specific conceptual domains (themes)

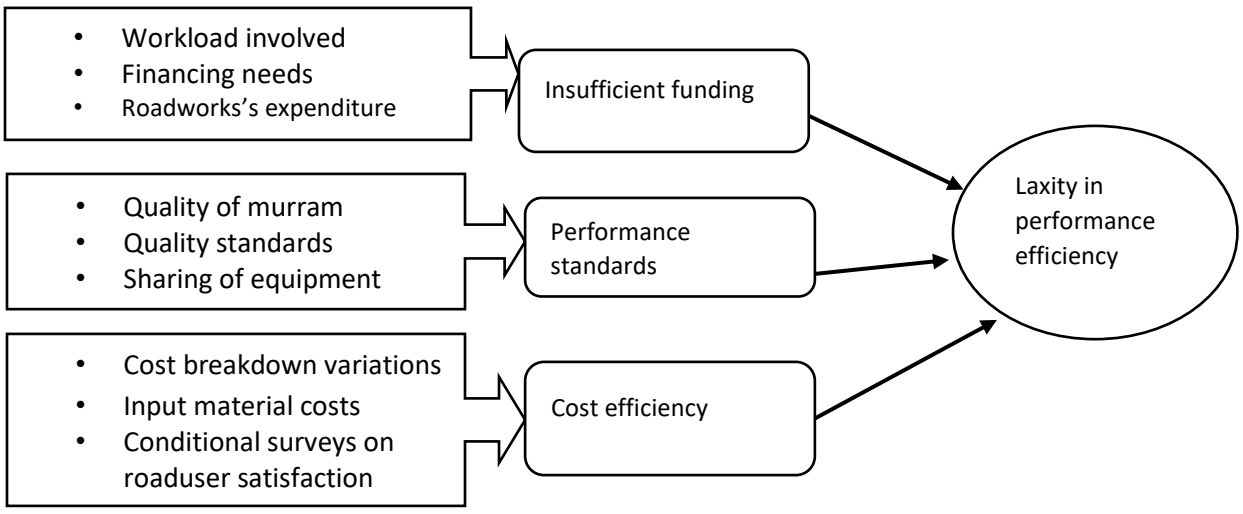
Results from the analysis of qualitative data

To obtain a clearer picture, the interviewees were asked to define and explain own understanding of PPEG to enable us to translate their narrative account into emerging themes and sub themes. The following sections present the perceived meaning of Procurement Performance Expectations Gap with their key themes and sub-themes.

The results reveal 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 from qualitative interviews, it was established that three major themes emerged to mean laxity in performance efficiency, laxity in level of performance effectiveness and low level of community satisfaction. The results for these themes and their sub-themes are discussed below:

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 following illustration depicting themes and sub themes contributing to laxity in performance efficiency as illustrated below:



Insufficient funding

The data collected from stakeholders suggests 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. ITs 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).

Further, another dimension of performance efficiency that interviewees identified was roadworks expenditure. The interviewee in D27 for example pointed out that,

> "*…they always think that you exaggerated expenditure, even when you tell them.....when they look at the figures, they always think we are eating the money...and we always breakdown the expenditure for them to understand and appreciate, but its stuck in their heads...."* (Interviewee D27*).*

This therefore implies that the community does not appreciate breakdown of works expenditures 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. Another subtheme that was identified as being part of laxity in performance efficiency is "performance standards".

Performance standards

The interviewee gave their opinions why they think performance standards are lacking in their DLGs, for instance in Case D71 intimates that,

"…Communities level of understanding standards is not there…The community thinks that if you bring an invoice of 26 million to repair an engine is too costly…yet wea re dealing with brand new machines. Community members are illiterate and pretends as if they know a lot of information".....(Interviewee D71).

In separate interviews, 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. In interviewee asserts that,

> "*…they compare what UNRA has done with the money and what the DLG has done and will keep on complaining. 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?...and why the community is complaining is because of the rains destroying our roads…*(Interviewee D55).

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

> *"…Sharing of equipment affects completion of roads on time. We actually not satisfied with the performance standards because of going by whats is available because og the 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 its not easy".* (Interviewee D22)

On a positive note, some respondents 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. 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 if some are down thus being stressed....you find some work which is supposed to be for a or bull dozer wheel loader....the grader is pushing...being used for compacting. Despite this ...they are performing to our expectations. In a related development, there are incidents of fuel siphoning."…* (Interviewee D25)

From all these quotations, the quality of murram featured prominently as an indicator of attainment of performance efficiency. 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 owners cannot give us murram."… (Interviewee D7).

> *"…sometimes procurement of murram complicates the whole process.....for instance in Soroti, when we get 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 murram 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).

> *"…In Kyotera, murram 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 murram and yet we don't have money for murram. so they willingly offer free murram."…* (Interviewee D13).

> *"…In hilly areas like Mitooma, is not easy to get murram even though the area is hilly. they don't have murram, because people are very close and highly populated. The small land available is already covered by gardens and residential houses and therefore getting murram is a challenge which affects us"…* (Interviewee D24).

From all the interviews above its clear that with even meagre resources left for procurement of murram, its no longer going to be an easy game. First its becoming scarce due to population explosion in many areas especially hilly, and even when you happen to get it, its becomes dam expensive. The DLGs are now at the mercy of the community to willingly offer free murram, if they want their road networks to be improved.

Cost efficiency

In this particular case, the interviewee explained how costs can deter achievement of efficiency levels. The interviewee for instance said 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 that smooth gravelling. We try to minimize costs by getting free murram."…*(Interviewee D13). Another 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 thew whole road will be on buying murram. 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 the community contribution and we tell them if you cannot give us gravel we shall go and work in other areas"…* (Interviewee D21).

Basing on these particular interviewee's assertions, DLGs try their best to minimize costs associated to achieving performance efficiency with minimal costs through getting free murram and reducing on overall costs, but this is not always the case in all areas of operation where in some areas murram can be got from very far and thus not becoming beneficial to freely get it due to excessive transport costs. The other very important aspect of understanding performance efficiency is conducting conditional surveys on roaduser satisfaction. Stressing this point, one interviewee for instance said that,

> "*…we conduct a roads inventory as a basis to determine which roads we need to work on. We compare projections visvis the results and we sometimes conduct a cost benefit analysis on the roads we work on. We do assessments every financial year and during the assessment we interact with the community to ascertain the most important spots we could work on basing on traffic flow and volume. we do have annual district roads inventory and conditional assessment survey done every financial year we look at the entire road network, we assess its condition on a scale of bad, poor or good and from there we select some roads to work the current financial year."…* (Interviewee D69).

> *"…We do assessments every financial year and during the assessment we interact with the community to ascertain the most important spots we could work on basing on traffic flow and volume."…* (Interviewee D1).

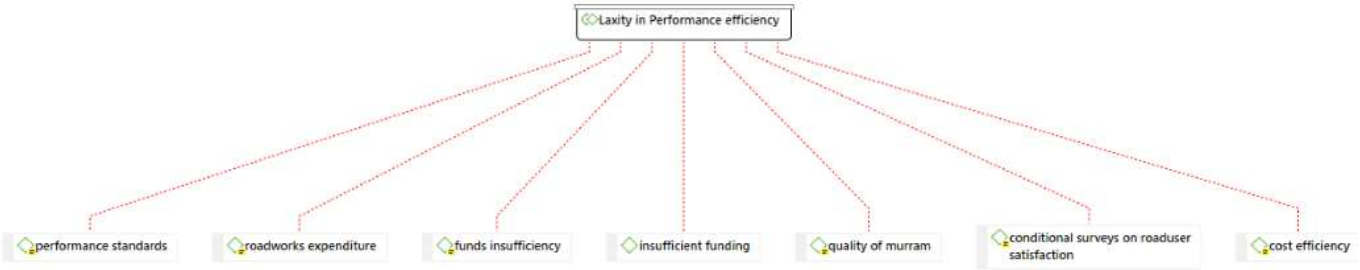
> *"…we do have annual district roads inventory and conditional assessment survey done every financial year we look at the entire road network, we assess its condition on a scale of bad, poor or good and from there we select some roads to work the current financial year. We also do traffic counting and frequency of road usage."…* (Interviewee D19).

Basing on the above interviewee's assertions, regularly conditional survey on roaduser satisfaction helps in streamlining/smoothening service delivery, and improves community interaction and engagement. All of these findings help create performance efficiency among different DLGs that perform this task.

Cost efficiency was further being achieved through organized barazas and radio talk shows where explanations on cost breakdowns were being read out to the listeners in their communities. This means that DLGs benefited from such efforts, because 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 they ask for BOQs 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 in Ntungamo we quoted so many square meters of a roof, for him 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 & D26)



Figures showing an ATLAS.ti radial diagram of performance efficiency with first order codes, second order themes and aggregated dimension

Source: Derived from qualitative data analysis

Laxity in Performance effectiveness

In relation to this study, performance effectiveness was generally understood to mean getting the right equipment to work on the desired community access roads. It was broken down into equipment quality, quality of roads being worked on, timely completion of roads and level of utilization of this equipment. The illustration showing a network of themes and sub themes that emerged is depicted below:

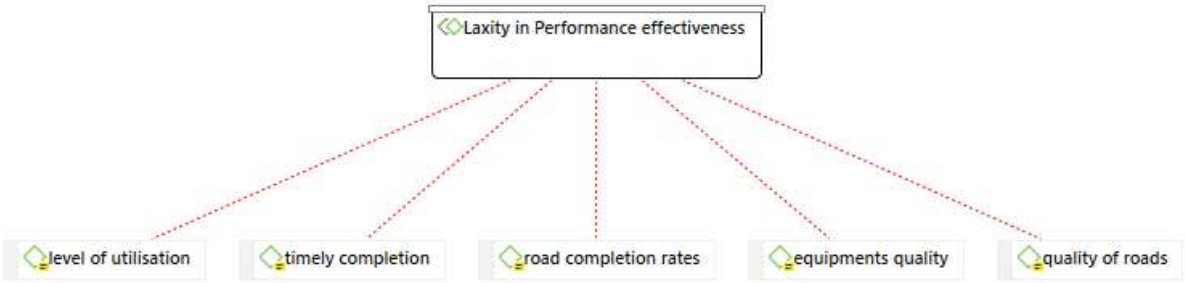


Figure showing a tree network of laxity in performance effectiveness

Several themes that emerged are displayed below:

1st order Concepts	**2nd Order Themes**	**Aggregated Dimension**
• Community appreciation of roads • Road maintenance • Community use or roads	Quality of roads	Laxity in performance effectiveness
• Timing of release of funds • Payment's processing • Operator allowances	Road completion rates	
• Community Fuel support • Extent of community collaboration	Level of utilisation of equipment	

In the context of performance effectiveness, quality of roads to the community meant roads that can be used regardless of the weather conditions, meaning the roads need to be worked on to withstand the inevitable challenging weather conditions in their areas. In their comparison of quality of roads before and after getting machines, the interviewee reacted that,

> *"…quality of roads improved because of the new quality equipment. however, the equipment are shared 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 murram in in their DLG, where the interviewee asserts that.

> *"…Our murram is not the best on roads for me i can make a good road using the smallest amount of money. But for the case of UNRA, the money put on 1km of a road is equivalent to what the entire DLG is given for an entire year, but with time, the community will continue appreciating our roads."…* (Interviewee D77)

In another separate interview in lyantonde, the views from the community was that the quality of works has improved. The interviewee confirms that,

> *"… In lyantonde, 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, where onspot assessment is employed every after a heavy downpour with technical people. The interviewee stresses that,

> *"…whenever it rains we just pick the RDC an 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).

Some respondents 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....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 its 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 loger good from the agents, and the sheer pin and other small unning parts. But whenever there is a serious need we put a notice to Bugembe and they forward it to the Service provider and they use the GPS to map where the machines are they and they come and service them on time."…* (Interviewee D43).

Road Completion Rates

Majority of the interviewees alluded 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 meager pay to the machine operators affecting their morale. The following responses illustrate how DLGs and roadusers reacted on timely completion of roads;

> *"roads not completed in 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 system delays processing of payments".* (Interviewee D31)

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

> *"…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 its not possible. What we pay them 50,000 it becomes an audit query yet UNRA pays them a lot of money like 200,000 shillings. This affects timely completion of works."* (Interviewee D7)

In some interviews, the allowances for operators featured prominently as a leading cause of performance lapses specifically failure to attain performance effectiveness targets, since they give a low moral to operators to work effectively. One respondent informed us 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)

Level of Utilisation of equipment

Qualitative data revealed that one performance effectiveness could not be dealt 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 narrates 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 stresses that in case they lacked fuel, they do approach powerful people in the DLG to provide fuel and work on the community roads, like in the case of

> *"…. with some big people in the District they buy us fuel through mobilisation and for us we provide machines and they offer fuel, like Hon. Kakooza".* (Interviewee D19).

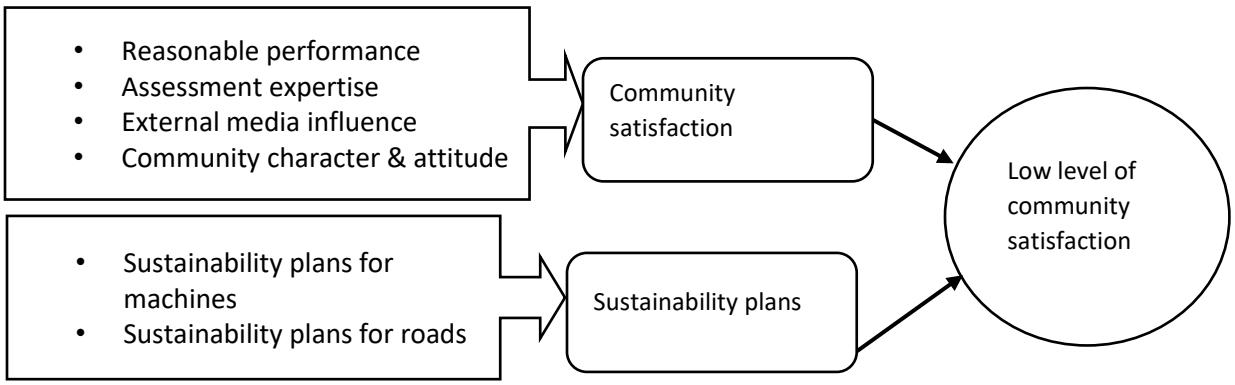
This symbiotic relationship was further strengthened and supported in a continued interview, in which the respondent further reiterated the need for collaboration in the sense that,

> *"…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).

Low level of Community Satisfaction

Qualitative results indicate that key informants perceived performance reasonableness to mean low level of community satisfaction. The main themes that emerged from qualitative interviews, relating to low levels of community satisfaction were "community satisfaction" and "sustainability"

1st order Concepts **2nd Order Themes** **Aggregated Dimension**



Community satisfaction

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 don't 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 dont know...because even if you use one million, 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 its not technical and for them they think we are eating money. |If you say 7 km with a budget of 30millions the community thinks we are going to cover the entire road with murram. so if you dont cover with murram, 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 murram...i challenged them to put a small portion of their murram on the road and we compare. That the murram we used was the best and at the end of three months their preferred murram had been washed away". ….* (Interviewee D21)

Contrary to the views gathered elsewhere on community roadworks satisfaction, in Mitooma, 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,

> *"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 severn 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).*

From the above, 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 ad differing 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).

The second subtheme under performance reasonableness was sustainability. Sustainability was looked into maintaining the quality for roadworks as well as sustaining the quality of machines after the warranty periods as presented below.

Sustainability plan (of roads and machines)

Qualitative data form Interviewee indicates DLGs need to ensure and enhance sustainability of the quality of equipment being used, since their warrant period is soon expiring as well as ensuring the maintenance of quality roads so far achieved. An interviewee in case D43 and 4 indicates that sustainability issues need to be looked into and is concerned and while responding to future minimization of performance gaps, he notes that,

"…the department of roads, what we have at hand, we sorely rely on 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 as when he said that,

"…The money is not enough for maintaining the equipments. The equipments 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 but it has never reached the account its now one year.". (Interviewee D42)

Some interviewee expressed some hope in achieving sustainability over time. The interviewee in interviewee D19 affirms 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)

In a nutshell, performance gaps are there, and may be the causes of performance gaps need to be looked into. For instance, staffing levels 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 bot 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. The subthemes and themes that emerged are indicated in the reality radial diagram of the qualitative flower below.

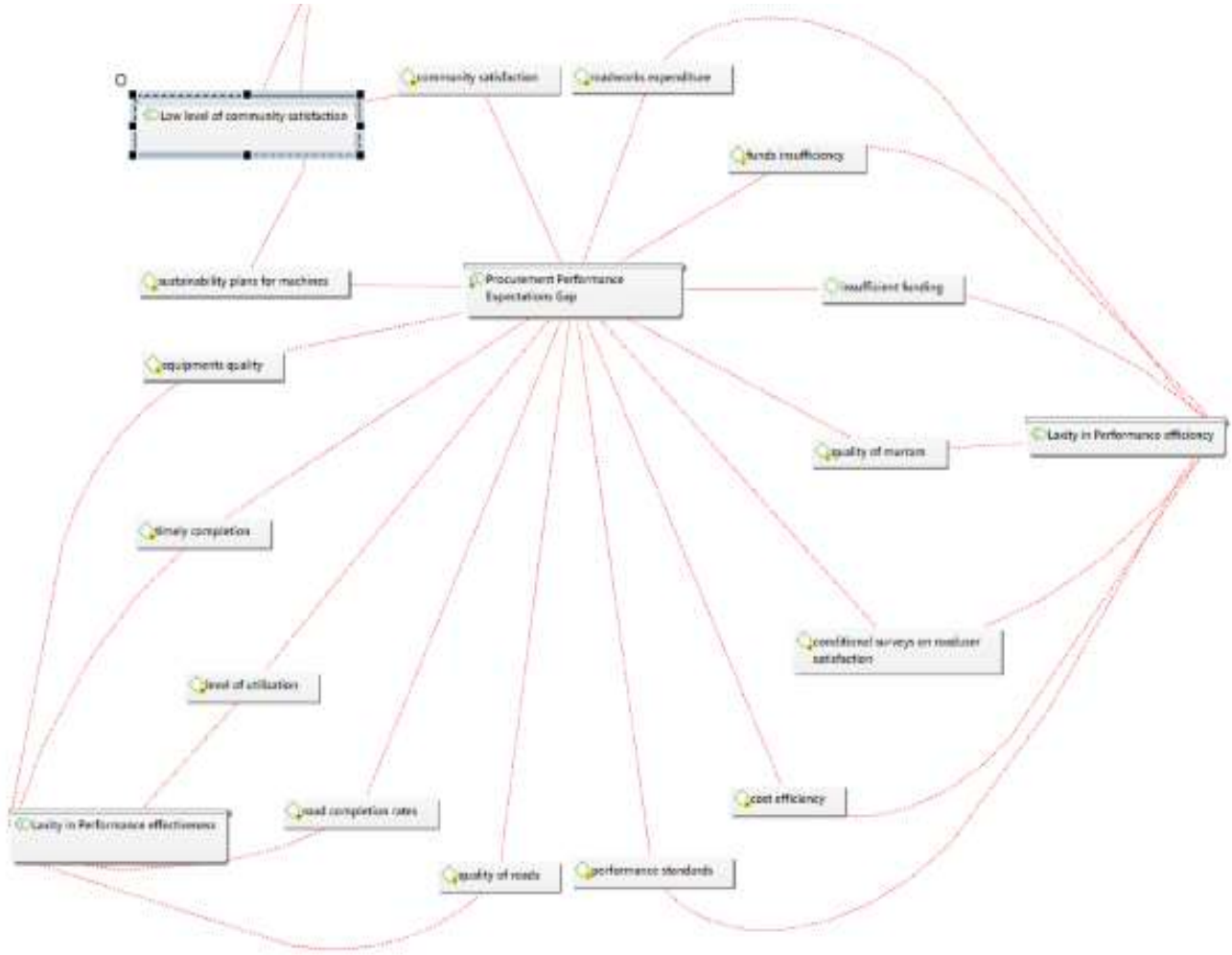


Figure showing a reality radial diagram of Performance reasonableness

Source: Primary qualitative data

In the above hierarchical model, Procurement Performance Expectations Gap was explained by Laxity in Performance Efficiency, Laxity in Performance effectiveness and low level of community satisfaction. Laxity in performance efficiency was further exhibited by insufficient roadworks expenditure, insufficient funding, poor quality of murram, limited conditional surveys in roadworks satisfaction, lack of breakdown of associated costs and low performance standards. Laxity in performance effectiveness was exhibited in the form of poor quality of roads, delayed road completion rates, insufficient road equipment spares and limited utilization of road equipment.

Understanding procurement performance expectations gap by the different stakeholder groups

Understanding stakeholders' reactions and assessments as expressed in this section of data analysis basing on Susanne (2020) approach is so valuable in explaining the different stakeholder groupings visualization of data. This section explains how the different groupings of the study are connected to each other in understanding a holistic relationship and segmentation of the data basing on different categories and regions. The following illustrations shows the understanding of public procurement performance expectations gap across the groups and the different regions of the country. The row and column entities of the tables presented below in the Sankey model as nodes and edges, showing the flow between each pair of nodes.

Understanding procurement performance expectations gap by the different stakeholder groups

In this study, the two categories of stakeholders were "technical personnel" and "road users". The following illustrations below demonstrate the "roadusers" and "Technical personnel" understanding of the Procurement performance expectations gap:

Table 3: Procurement performance expectations gap by stakeholder categories

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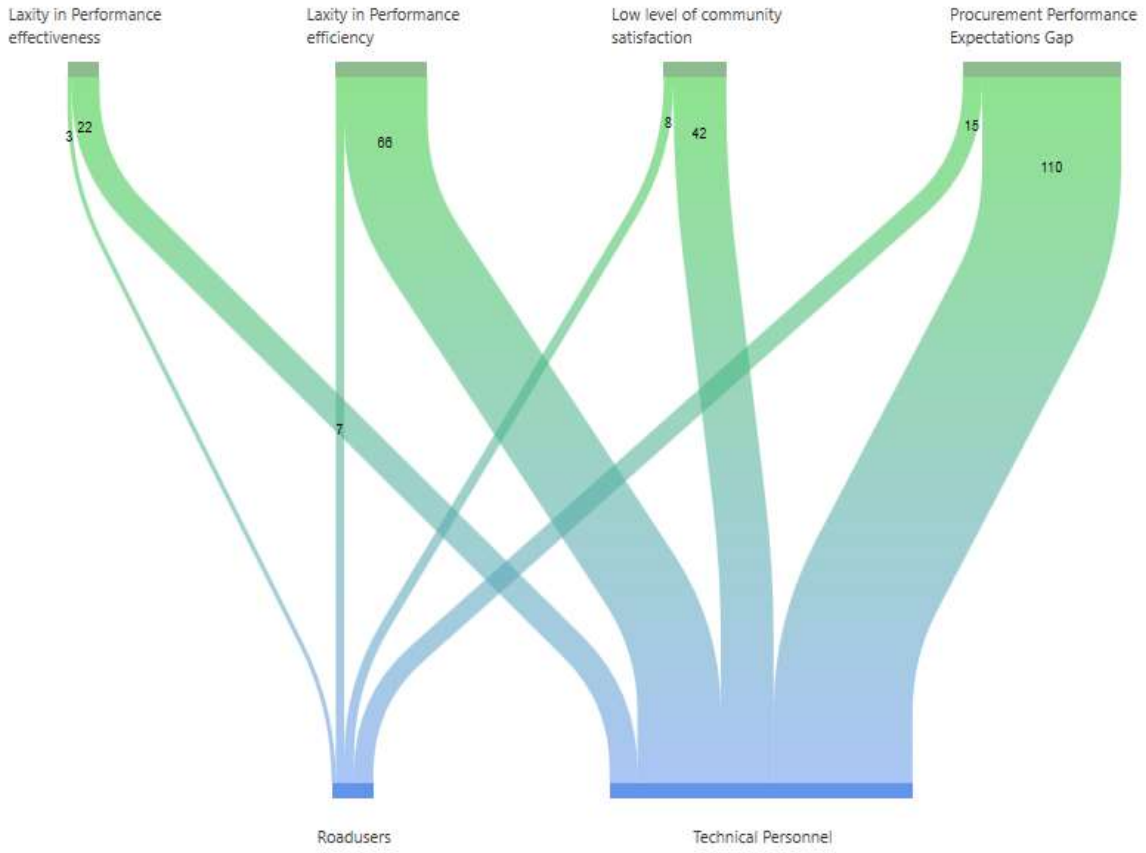
Help | Code–Document Table | View | Sankey Diagram

Code–Document Table

			Roadusers 6 43	Technical Personnel 37 263	Totals
community satisfaction		61	5 12.82%	36 12.86%	41 12.85%
performance reasonableness		5	1 2.56%	4 1.43%	5 1.57%
Laxity in Performance effectiveness	4	34	3 7.69%	22 7.86%	25 7.84%
Laxity in Performance efficiency	7	106	7 17.95%	66 23.57%	73 22.88%
Low level of community satisfaction	2	73	8 20.51%	42 15.00%	50 15.67%
Procurement Performance Expectations Gap	13	187	15 38.46%	110 39.29%	125 39.18%
Totals			39 100.00%	280 100.00%	319 100.00%

From the table above, 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 murram 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, also think that the performance gap is indeed there and to them 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 roadusers in the sense that for them they are largely blaming insufficient funding for failure to attain performance efficiency, costly murram and the community being not appreciative of the level of performance attained so far. by the DLGs. Overall, 38.46% of roadusers 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. Its corresponding sanky diagram showing the thickness of the edges that correspond to the cell values from the table above is shown below:



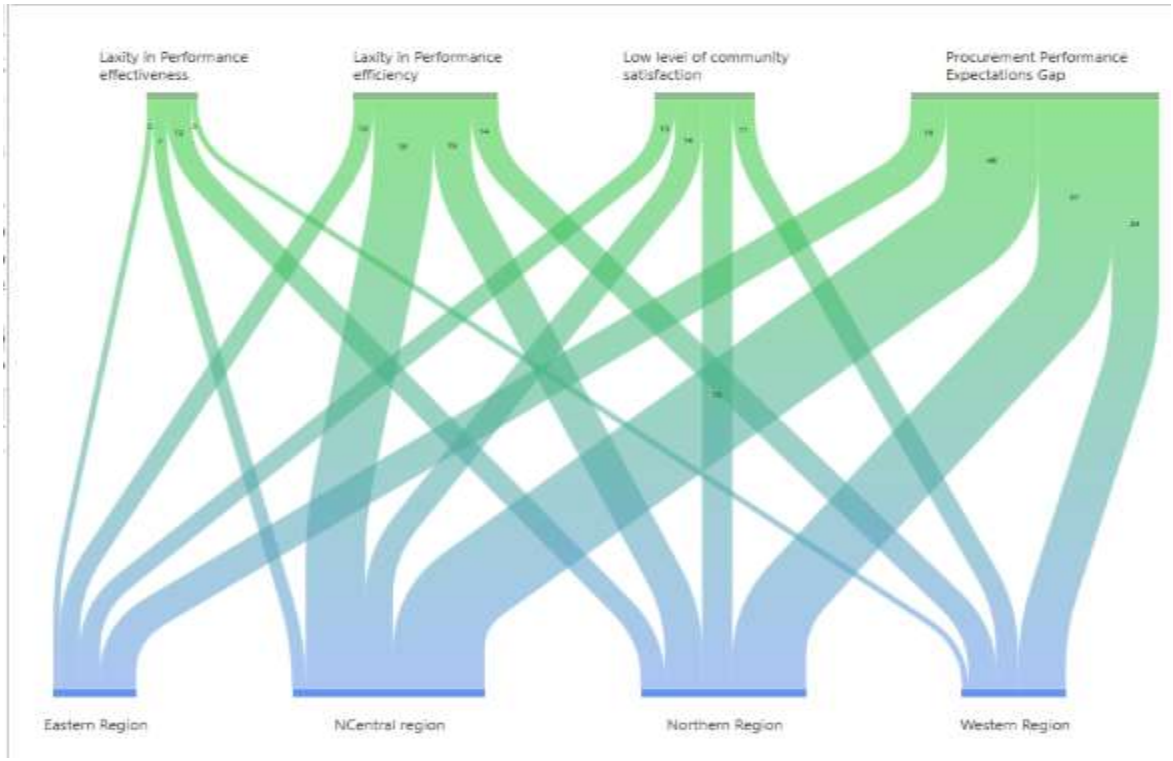
Understanding procurement performance expectations gap across regions

The following illustrations shows the comparison of issues that 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 contribute 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 the table below. 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 experiences 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 the table below:

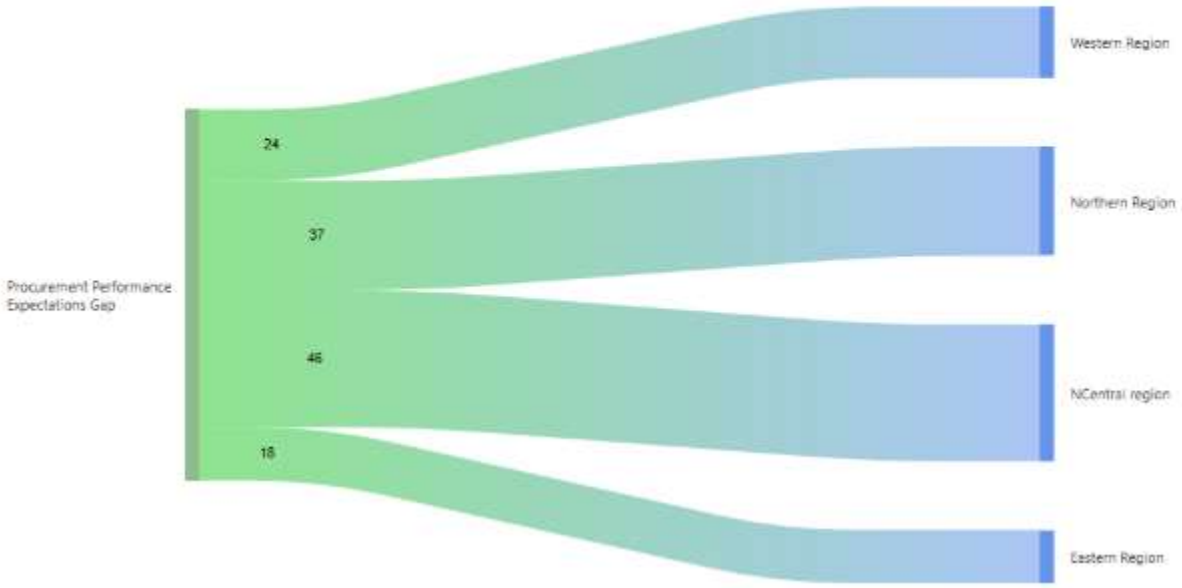
Table 4: Procurement performance expectations gap by regions

	Eastern Region 6 41	NCentral region 18 119	Northern Region 11 80	Western Region 8 66	Totals
community satisfaction 61	9 17.31%	12 10.91%	13 13.54%	7 11.48%	41 12.85%
performance reasonableness 5	2 3.85%	1 0.91%		2 3.28%	5 1.57%
Laxity in Performance effectiveness 4 34	3 5.77%	7 6.36%	12 12.50%	3 4.92%	25 7.84%
Laxity in Performance efficiency 7 106	10 19.23%	30 27.27%	19 19.79%	14 22.95%	73 22.88%
Low level of community satisfaction 2 73	10 19.23%	14 12.73%	15 15.63%	11 18.03%	50 15.67%
Procurement Performance Expectations Gap 13 187	18 34.62%	46 41.82%	37 38.54%	24 39.34%	125 39.18%
Totals	52 100.00%	110 100.00%	96 100.00%	61 100.00%	319 100.00%

The associated Sankey diagram for PPEG across regions is illustrated below reveals the thickness of the edges resemble the cell values from the table above. From the Sankey diagram below, 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.



	Eastern Region 6 41	NCentral region 18 119	Northern Region 11 80	Western Region 8 66	Totals
Procurement Performance Expectati... 13 187	18 100.00%	46 100.00%	37 100.00%	24 100.00%	125 100.00%
Totals	18 100.00%	46 100.00%	37 100.00%	24 100.00%	125 100.00%



	Eastern Regi... 6 41	NCentral re... 18 119	Northern Re... 11 80	Western Re... 8 66	Totals
Laxity in Performance effectiveness 5 65	6	13	20	5	44
Laxity in Performance efficiency 7 106	10	30	19	14	73
Low level of community satisfaction 2 73	10	14	15	11	50
Totals	26	57	54	30	167

From the table above, 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 above. This is also demonstrated by the relative and absolute frequencies in the illustrations above.

Finally, lower levels of community roadworks satisfaction was explained by lack of sustainability plans for roadworks equipment and differing levels of community roadworks satisfaction. In the illustration above, 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. The analyzed content (content analysis) bringing out the major themes from the key informant interviews following (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012) approach of thematic analysis is presented in the table below:

Table 5: A matrix showing the 1st order concepts, 2nd order themes, third order themes and core/ aggregated dimension for procurement performance expectations gap

1st order Descriptive concepts	2nd order themes	Third order themes	Core theme (aggregated themes)
• Workload involved • Financing needs • Roadworks's expenditure • Quality of murram • Quality standards • Sharing of equipment • Cost breakdown variations • Input material costs • Conditional surveys on roaduser satisfaction	• Insufficient funding • Performance standards • Cost efficiency	• Laxity in performance efficiency	• Procurement Performance Expectations gap
• Community appreciation of roads • Road maintenance • Community use or roads • Timing of release of funds • Payment's processing • Operator allowances • Community Fuel support • Extent of community collaboration	• Quality of roads • Road completion rates • Level of utilisation of equipment	• Laxity in performance effectiveness	
• Reasonable performance • Assessment expertise • External media influence • Community character & attitude • Sustainability plans for machines • Sustainability plans for roads	• Community satisfaction • Sustainability plans	• Low level of community satisfaction	

Conclusion

PPEG was perceived to mean general lapse in perceived satisfaction levels as compared to performance expectations, creating a performance gap in the quality of completed works from their own perspective. Results confirmed the existence of a performance gap, that must be urgently addressed.

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