search thus relies on conceptual representation as theoretical basis (Przyborski and Wohlrab-Sahr 2014). I therefore collected empirical data until a saturation point was reached, and no new details or concepts came up which could have added further aspects to theory (Corbin and Strauss 2008).

Having carried out a total of 103 interviews (Appendix A-2), which showed a number of repeating statements, I thus postulate that my findings are generalizable beyond the individual interviewees for the discursive perspective within/on policy processes and project implementation in the setting studied. While some additional interviews carried out with project participants and BMBF staff in other funding initiatives within and outside of FONA suggest that findings such as concepts and types developed might possibly be transferable to further policy and implementation contexts, this assumption would not hold scientifically, and further generalisations would require further research.

4.4   Fieldwork

4.4.1   Entry into the field

In order to carry out this research, the cooperation of both the BMBF and the projects to be examined was essential – ethically as well as pragmatically. Therefore, the ministry was asked for approval and non-monetary support at an early stage, and luckily was supportive of the proposed research and open towards a scientific reflection of its policies. Heads of both relevant sub-departments of the ministry at the time of starting into data collection (2012), Maximilian Metzger of the Subdepartment for International Cooperation (Dep. 2.1) as well as Wilfried Kraus of the Subdepartment for Sustainability, Climate, Energy (Dep. 7.2) gave official permission to conduct interviews among their ministerial staff. Due to existing power hierarchies and dependencies, consent by these high-level gatekeepers was essential for the process of data collection, not only to conduct interviews among lower level ministerial staff, but also among potential interview partners in funded projects or project management agencies. In view of the projects visited as case studies, the German coordinators were additionally addressed in their role as gatekeepers.

Having worked in the International Bureau of the BMBF at the project management agency before – even continuing so during the early stages of the PhD – was a double-edged sword. Mentioning my background sometimes functioned as a door-opener, as the job seemed to prove insights into the context of BMBF work. On other occasions, however, it caused suspicion among interviewees, who suspected that my research was mingled with BMBF objectives, or even that I was researching undercover for BMBF purposes. The International Bureau, on the other hand, as agency directly working for and depending on the BMBF, seemed to fear

potentially critical research results and underlined that it was problematic to employ me in my double role as staff and researcher. On this background, I chose to straighten things out and to resign from the job in order to dedicate my full time to the PhD before starting fieldwork.

4.4.2 Interviews

As mentioned before, most data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Before the interviews, guidelines were designed containing a list of questions and topics that should be covered, in order to ensure reliability and comparability of data (Bernard 2006). However, in the beginning of fieldwork the interview guidelines were too closely linked to my research questions, too theoretical and thus too abstract and sometimes not readily understood by my interviewees. I therefore had to translate them into a language and level of practice meaningful to interviewees. The guidelines were thus adapted during the process of fieldwork, also based on new insights and according to each interview partners' expertise and insights. An example of an interview guideline is included as Appendix A-3.

Whenever possible, I sent the interview questions as well as an abstract of my research proposal to the potential interview partners via email in advance. If this wasn't possible, interviewees were informed about the objectives of research at the beginning of the interview, which mainly took place in the interviewee's work space. With the prior consent of the interviewees, most interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed later. An exemplary cover page and the transcript of the first minutes of an interview are included as Appendix A-4. Depending on the individual interview partner, I conducted the interviews in German, English, Spanish or Brazilian Portuguese. For the sake of readability, I translated all interview statements cited within this book into English. No research assistants or translators participated in the data collection process.

4.4.3 Participant observation

In order to produce dependable data out of participant observation, methods literature recommends prolonged stays in the field combined with the systematic recording of data in field diaries and fieldnotes (Cresswell 1998). Accordingly, I spent two months in each of the case study projects. In LiWa, this meant to participate in the project's everyday routines, staying at the project office for the time and following the project coordinator in his daily work, meetings, stakeholder events, visits to project sites, etc. In IWAS-Agua DF, the project set up was quite different. No project office existed, so instead of relying on informal conversations and participant observation, I collected information about the project routine through semi-structured interviews with the numerous project participants at different

work places. However, during my field stay, a Brazilian-German project week took place, including meetings and workshops as well as high-level events such as a reception at the German Embassy. On these occasions, participant observation was useful to witness the

> "discursive and non-discursive practices in discourse production, in the setting up and using of dispositifs, the practical reception/adaptation/confrontation with discourses and the analysis of the interplay between situational contexts and practices with discourses or the constitution of contexts through discourses." (Keller 2013: 102)

Participant observation therefore produced quite distinct data from interviews, as it showed how projects dealt with the dominant policy discourse and its effects in action. Participant observation additionally provided insights into interactions between policy makers, project participants and other actors during several conferences, such as agenda-setting events (Appendix A-1). On these occasions, manifold informal conversations with project participants, ministerial employees and project management agency staff occurred, which often contributed undistorted, unfiltered and uninhibited statements on the research subject. During the occasions of participant observation, I took fieldnotes of the conversations, observations, preliminary ideas of analysis, etc. Due to the mostly formal settings of participant observation I could write them down immediately in my laptop or paper notebook without causing irritation. Appendix A-5 depicts an exemplary page from my fieldnotes on paper.

4.5   Data analysis

In the approach to discourse as conceptualized in SKAD (ch. 3), statements, practices and dispositives are considered as "manifestations of the structured processing of controversial social knowledge" (Keller 2013: 85). SKAD is therefore aimed at finding the *typical*: From individual utterances, general statements about a discourse are abstracted. This means that while acknowledging the coexistence of different forms of knowledge or constructed realities, discourse analysis is not interested in reconstructing individual, subjective opinions, meaning ascriptions, or knowledge – this is a major difference to other forms of qualitative, interpretive data analysis (Keller 2011b; 2013). Therefore, the aim of data analysis was to find typical patterns, shared knowledge and interpretations of reality among the actors (Meuser and Nagel 2002). Interviews are considered as instances of discursive events, which contribute statements to a discourse. These in turn make up the body of a discourse's contents.