

Visa Tuominen

Two birds with one stone? Exploring the role of climate change mitigation in development cooperation

The case of Energy and Environment Partnership with the Mekong Region

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This Master's thesis explores the role of climate change mitigation in a development cooperation program. The case chosen for exploring this issue was a Finnish development cooperation program, the Energy and Environment Partnership (EEP) with the Mekong Region. EEP Mekong presented a good case for investigating the recent trend in which climate change is increasingly being mainstreamed into development cooperation.

The industrialized countries have committed to provide 0.7% of their gross national income for development cooperation. More recently the industrialized countries have pledged to support developing countries in climate change related activities. Concerns have been raised that the new pledges for climate finance are diverting funds from development cooperation. This study can be seen to represent a case of a donor initiated development cooperation program, funded with official development aid, in which climate change has significantly influenced the design of the program.

This issue was approached from a constructivist point of view. The research was carried out looking at norm diffusion and how norms influence the program, and the research question was: how does the norm of climate change mitigation diffuse and inform behavior in the EEP Mekong? The empirical focus in this study was on the norm of climate change mitigation, how actors understand it and how it informs behavior within the program. This issue was discussed in the context of development cooperation, and in order to understand the issue better, this paper also analyzed the norms of poverty reduction and ownership in the EEP.

A mission to the Mekong region took place in the beginning of 2011. Eight interviews conducted during the mission form the main data used in this study. In addition, interviews were conducted with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Nordic Development Fund. Documents of the program were used to complement the material collected with the interviews.

The main findings of this study point out that the EEP Mekong is, indeed, strongly geared towards climate change mitigation and outcomes for poverty reduction can be questioned. Mitigating climate change turned out to be taken-for-granted in the program. The norm of climate change mitigation can be said to be diffused to the EEP and inform the program. However, it seemed that it was the idea of mitigating climate change that was the key concern, not achieving significant emission reduction. As such, the content of the norm of climate change mitigation had changed from what it was originally taken to prescribe. Although diffused, norms do not always have their intended effect. The norm of ownership did not seem to be subscribed to on many levels in the program. There were indications that this was due to the fact, that the content of the norm was understood differently by different actors.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Climate change and the role of least developed countries – setting the context for the study.....	5
2.1. Cambodia and the Lao PDR	5
2.2. Climate change and the least developed countries	7
2.3. The role of energy in development	11
2.4. The Energy and Environment Partnership with the Mekong Region.....	13
3. Theory.....	15
3.1. Constructivism.....	17
3.2. Norms	18
3.2.1. Ideas – norms	21
3.2.2. Norm evolution.....	24
3.3. Different models of norm diffusion.....	25
3.3.1. Norm emergence, tipping point and cascades.....	26
3.3.2. Boomerang and spiral models.....	27
3.4. The norms in this research	30
3.5. The application used in this research.....	32
4. Methodology	35
4.1. Case selection	36
4.2. Preparing for the interviews.....	37
4.3. Operationalization of the interviews.....	40
4.4. Assessing the interviews.....	44
4.5. Analyzing the data	46
5. Analysis	47
5.1. Norm origins.....	48
5.1.1. Climate change mitigation.....	48
5.1.2. Poverty reduction	51
5.1.3. Ownership	52
5.2. Finnish Development Policy	53
5.3. Energy and Environment Partnership with the Mekong Region.....	57
5.4. Donor interviews – assessing what the EEP is really about	63
5.4.1. “Our project is very much climate change oriented.” The role of mitigation in the EEP.....	63
5.4.2. “The fact is right, I think on paper we are a development program.” Poverty reduction and ownership in the EEP	66
5.4.3. Conclusions on interviews with group A	69
5.5. Norm internalization and norm content	71

5.5.1. Mitigation	72
5.5.2. It's a fine idea but – poverty reduction and ownership in the EEP	75
5.5.3. The role of the EEP in diffusing norms	80
6. Conclusions.....	82
References:	90

Abbreviations

DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EE	Energy Efficiency
EEP	Energy and Environment Partnership
FFRC	Finland Futures Research Centre
FORMIN	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
GNI	Gross National Income
IEA	International Energy Agency
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IPCC	International Panel on Climate Change
LDC	Least Developed Country
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Aid
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RCU	Regional Coordination Unit
RE	Renewable Energy
tCO ₂ e	Tonnes of CO ₂ equivalent
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Conference on Climate Change
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTE	Waste-to-energy

Tables and Figures

Table 1	Socio-economic and energy indicators in Cambodia, Laos and Finland	8
Figure 1	Ideas – norms	22
Figure 2	Theories of norm diffusion	28
Figure 3	The research setting	34

1. Introduction

Climate change has been defined as one of the most pressing issues of our time. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the current scientific consensus agree that climate change is the result of human activity and the phenomenon will have devastating effects unless greenhouse gas emissions are drastically cut. (See e.g. IPCC 2007; Stern 2007.) It is widely agreed that the industrialized countries are responsible for contributing to climate change, while developing countries will be most affected by the changes climate change is causing and will eventually cause. In the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) the industrialized countries have committed to providing the developing countries the additional costs of transforming business-as-usual fossil-fuel dependent economic growth strategies into a low-emission climate-resilient development path.

Objectives for development cooperation have been codified in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs are clearly measurable targets and the purpose of development cooperation is to achieve these objectives. The Millennium Declaration was endorsed by 189 countries in the year 2000, with poverty reduction singled out as the overarching objective. According to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities adopted in the UNFCCC, poverty reduction and sustainable development remain the priorities of developing countries, while the industrialized countries are responsible for responding to climate change. Nevertheless, the diversion of official development aid for climate change related activities has been argued by many. Climate funding for developed countries should be new and additional to existing official development assistance¹. In other words, climate funding should not reduce resources from traditional development collaboration that aims at poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The aim of this Master's thesis is to explore the relationship of development cooperation and climate change mitigation in a Finnish development cooperation program – the Energy and Environment Partnership (EEP) with the Mekong region. The EEP is a grant offering program which is aimed at “supporting wider provision and use of renewable energy and combating climate change” (EEP 2011). The first EEP was initiated in the World Summit on Sustainable Development

¹ New and additional financial resources were originally promised by the industrialized countries in Rio Earth Summit in 1992, but most of the funds were never delivered. The pledge was repeated in the Kyoto Protocol.

in Johannesburg 2002 and launched in Central America in 2003.² Positive results encouraged the continuation of the program and its replication in other geographical areas. The second Energy and Environment Partnership was launched in the Mekong region in 2009. The role of Finland as promoting this approach can be considered in the light that Finland has announced itself as a first-mover in the framework of greening aid (Bruun & Käkönen 2011), and for example Jänicke has emphasized the role of pioneer countries in the development of new policy approaches (2005, 130–133).

As such, the EEP Mekong presents a good case for investigating the recent trend in which climate change is increasingly being mainstreamed into development cooperation. This study can be seen to represent a case of a donor initiated development cooperation program, funded with official development aid, in which climate change has significantly influenced the design of the program. The context for these issues will be explored and analyzed in chapter two.

The research question I aim to answer in this Master's thesis is: how does the norm of climate change mitigation diffuse and inform behaviour in the EEP Mekong? The empirical focus in this study is on *the diffusion of the norm of climate change mitigation, how actors understand it and how it informs behavior within the program*. This issue will also be discussed in the wider context where climate change perspectives are integrated into development cooperation. In order to understand the context better this paper will also analyze the norms of poverty reduction and ownership, which are two central norms governing development cooperation. Poverty reduction sets the ultimate objective for development cooperation while ownership highlights the processes and relations between actors. I will focus on the two least developed countries (LDCs) that are involved in the EEP Mekong, Cambodia and the Lao PDR, as I believe their status as LDCs will provide a beneficial point of departure for this research.

In order to be able to answer the research questions thoroughly I will first have to answer the following questions: What are norms? Where do norms come from? How do norms diffuse and influence behavior? And, how do norms interact with each other? These questions will be answered in chapter three. I see the norms selected for the focus of this research as being able to

² Energy and Environment Partnership (EEP) programme is one of over 30 established Type 2 partnerships dedicated to energy as a follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg in 2002. From 2010 onwards the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland has expanded the program to Mekong Region, Southern and East Africa, Indonesia and the Andean Region. By now the program has supported over 160 partnerships in eight countries in Central America, followed by the newly selected partnerships from the Mekong and Southern Africa in 2010.

provide insights for understanding the phenomenon studied. Choosing a different point of departure could naturally yield different results. However, I believe the approach chosen reflects well some of the key factors influencing the new trend of climate change being mainstreamed into development cooperation. Although development cooperation can sometimes be attributed to serving military or economic interests of the donors, it is often explained through some sort of responsibilities and altruism that the industrialized countries have towards developing countries. As such, an underlying assumption in this research is that the main drivers of the EEP program are international norms that proscribe certain behavior. When analyzing the internalization of the norms some material outcomes will also be explored. Although not an exhaustive account of material outcomes I believe them, or to be precise, the lack of material incentives, to further justify the approach chosen.

The third chapter will also explore the key assumptions of this study, give an overlook of previous research on norms in International Relations and, finally, explain how the norms theory will be utilized in this study. In the fourth chapter the methodology of this case study will be explained. This study is largely based on material collected with focused interviews with key individuals of the EEP Mekong, conducted in the Mekong region and in Finland during the first half of 2011. Documentation on the program and its projects will be used to complement the information collected with the interviews.

In the fifth chapter the insights of the previous chapters will be drawn together for the analysis of how the norms of climate change mitigation, poverty reduction and ownership function in the EEP and guide its processes. I will start by pointing to the international treaties, declarations and agreements³ in which these norms have been institutionalized and show how they appear in Finnish Development Policy. I will then look at the frames given to the norms in Finnish Development Policy, and then move on to analyse how they appear in the EEP program document. The diffusion of these norms to the program and within the program will be explored. I will first look at the institutionalization of the norms and how the donors and EEP staff understand them before turning to look at the internalization of the norms and how the project leaders and representatives understand them.

³ In this study I will use the term "agreements" to collectively refer to the Paris Declaration, Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, the Kyoto Protocol and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This is merely a practical choice. I see all of the aforementioned to be agreements of some sort.

Although most concepts will be defined in the chapters to follow I find it important to clarify some central concepts here to avoid misunderstandings. I define norms in this research as *shared expectations about appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity*. Poverty reduction is the underlying objective of development cooperation. Different measures can be, and are, taken when striving for poverty reduction. Fukuda-Parr and Hulme call this objective the antipoverty norm and have defined it by what reads in the Millennium Declaration that “extreme, dehumanizing poverty is morally unacceptable and should be eradicated” (Fukuda-Parr & Hulme, 2011). Defined in this way, the norm does not prescribe behavior per se, but prescribes what should be the objective of this behavior.

Development cooperation is mainly what industrialized countries do in order to eradicate poverty. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is the most important international body monitoring the use of funds for this purpose and has criteria for what can be counted as official development aid (ODA). As such, appropriate use of ODA aims for poverty reduction. Poverty is a multifaceted and complex issue, and there is no consensus as to what the best ways to achieve this objective are or as to a simple “cure”. Therefore, giving a clear answer as to what works in which context is not a simple task and I have no means to give a thorough answer to this question.

The Energy and Environment Partnership is a Finnish ODA funded development cooperation program, and it has a significant climate component, as I will demonstrate. Finland has, among most other industrialised countries, committed to providing new and additional climate finance for the developing countries. “New and additional” is commonly understood to mean funding above the 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) that industrialized countries committed to provide for development cooperation in 1970, but have yet to deliver (ODI 2010). As this remains the case the actual baseline against which new and additional should be calculated remains debated (IIED 2010). Finland does not make a clear distinction between climate finance and development cooperation, but provides aggregate figures, although individual projects are usually categorized. A quote from the former prime minister of Finland illustrates some of the attitudes sometimes held on this issue: “What is climate financing and what is aid? This is a matter of opinion, to which there is yet no clear answer.”⁴ (Vanhanen, 2010.) Regardless of whether one accepts the notion that industrialized countries would not always know what they are doing, judging from outcomes,

⁴ Translation by author.

it should be quite clear whether a certain program or project contributes towards climate change mitigation, poverty reduction or both.

From this starting point this study sets to explore the role of climate change in a Finnish development cooperation program and whether these two objectives are compatible in the given context. This will be done looking at how norms influence the development intervention and how the actors in the program see the outcomes coming about and the influence of the norms on them.

This study was carried out mostly as a part of a larger research project by the Finland Futures Research Centre. The COOL-project⁵ was funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and it analyzed different climate finance mechanisms as part of Finnish development cooperation. As a part of the project a presentation (Bruun et al. 2011) was given in Helsinki in February 2011 in a conference called *Reframing Sustainability? Climate Change and North-South Dynamics*, which explored a number of the themes focused on in the next chapter. A policy oriented version based on the analysis in chapter five will also be published in a forthcoming book, which is the outcome of the COOL-project.

2. Climate change and the role of least developed countries – setting the context for the study

“This kind of twofold objective derives from international negotiations [...] and a country like Cambodia has no obligations to reduce emissions.” (Interview 12B.)

2.1. Cambodia and the Lao PDR

The geographical focus of this study is the Mekong region, particularly Cambodia and the Lao PDR, both of which are categorized by the UN as least developed countries (LDCs). LDCs are a group of 48 countries that can be defined as the poorest countries of the world. They are often singled out as the key beneficiaries that development cooperation activities should target. A country is classified as an LDC if it meets three criteria (UNCTAD 2011):

⁵ Adequacy of Climate Change Mitigation Initiatives in Laos and Cambodia: **C**omparing **O**ptions and Analysing **O**bstacles in **L**ocal Context (COOL).

- 1) low-income (three-year average GNI per capita of less than US \$905, which must exceed \$1,086 to leave the list)
- 2) human assets weakness (based on indicators of nutrition, health, education and adult literacy) and
- 3) economic vulnerability (based on instability of agricultural production, instability of exports of goods and services, economic importance of non-traditional activities, merchandise export concentration, handicap of economic smallness, and the percentage of population displaced by natural disasters)

Although the EEP Mekong covers four countries including Thailand and Vietnam, in addition to Cambodia and the Lao PDR, the reasons to focus on the two LDC countries is twofold. First, although the 48 countries in the world currently classified as LDCs are very different in many aspects, they have certain similarities which makes it sensible to look at them as a group in certain circumstances. They are highlighted as the key targets of development aid by the donor community. They have also contributed the least for climate change. Another feature I want to point out here is the aid dependency of LDCs, namely that their dependency on aid can be so overwhelming that it has raised serious concerns over how national priorities and objectives are set. Although this phenomenon has been observed with many developing countries, it is most present with the LDCs. Many studies have raised questions and pointed out that the capability of LDCs to actually set their own national priorities can be very limited. (See e.g. Whitfield 2009; Babb & Carruthers 2008.) This is due to the phenomenon wherein developing countries assume or predict what the donor preferences are in order to please donor preferences, and to assure that they will not lose out on development aid in case their own 'national priorities' do not match with what the donors want to fund (see e.g. Mosley & Harrigan 1991).

In both Cambodia and the Lao PDR, approximately one third of the population lives on less than one dollar per day. Finland, as a donor, attaches particular importance to assisting least developed countries, as they are among the countries most vulnerable to climate change.⁶ (Ministry of Environment and Statistics Finland 2009, 198.)

In Cambodia, access to modern energy services has been defined as a priority problem for the vast majority of the population. Only 20 percent of the population has access to electricity and 85

⁶ Besides Finland's eight long-term partners in development cooperation, Finland has also provided assistance to other least developed countries particularly vulnerable to climate change. Laos is among these countries. The assistance has included forestry and capacity building of the governments. (Ministry of Environment and Statistics Finland 2009, 198.)

percent of Cambodians live in rural areas, with agriculture as their primary economic activity. Cambodia ratified the UNFCCC in 1995 and accessed to the Kyoto Protocol in 2002. The first national inventory of greenhouse gas emissions in 1994 calculated that the energy sector was contributing three percent of total emissions (DANIDA 2008). According to the International Energy Agency's figures, the emissions have been relatively stable from energy production, and calculated emissions per capita are around 0.3 tCO₂e⁷ per capita (IEA 2011). The National Strategic Development Plan of Cambodia places poverty reduction and progress towards the MDGs as the highest national priorities (The Royal Government of Cambodia 2011).

The Lao PDR is also a signatory of the UNFCCC and a party to the Kyoto Protocol. Finland is currently supporting the Lao PDR in developing a national renewable energy strategy (EEP 2010). The Lao PDR has extensive hydro-power resources and also huge untapped potential in this area. Today, the Lao PDR is exporting around 90 percent of its electricity, mostly to neighboring countries. Around 70 percent of Laotians have access to electricity. Especially mountainous regions and some rural areas are not connected to electricity services. The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy of Lao (Lao People's Democratic Republic 2004) identifies poverty reduction, enhanced governance and the creation of an enabling environment for growth and development as the main development objectives. The per capita emissions are also around 0.3 tCO₂e (Pasanen forthcoming)⁸.

To put these figures into perspective, the average per capita tCO₂e emissions in the world are around 4 tCO₂e, and 12 tCO₂e in Finland. As such, it can safely be said that the per capita emissions in both Cambodia and the Lao PDR are easily under a tenth of the world average emissions. The EEP program document provides a good summary of many key indicators for these countries, with Finland being the point of comparison. These indicators can be found in Table 1.

2.2. Climate change and the least developed countries

In 1992 in the United Nations Framework Conventions on Climate Change, 192 countries signed in recognition that international efforts are required if the hardest effects of climate change are to be avoided. The agreement acknowledged that industrialized countries are largely responsible for the vast majority of greenhouse gas emissions and should bear the burden of reducing emissions. Quantified reduction commitments were agreed upon in the Kyoto agreement in 1997, and a number of mechanisms were created to facilitate these reductions. The underlying idea behind

⁷ Tonnes of CO₂ equivalent.

⁸ The officials at the Ministry of Energy and Mines of the Lao PDR have placed their estimates around similar figures.

many of these mechanisms is that for the global climate it makes no difference where the reductions take place. Therefore, taking advantage of market mechanisms the emission reductions could be made cheaper by facilitating the industrialized countries paying for reductions where they are the cheapest to execute. The most important of these mechanisms is the Emissions Trading Scheme initiated in the European Union. For the developing countries a Clean Development Mechanism was set up. Through this mechanism, industrialized countries could pay for emission reductions in developing countries in exchange for credits permitting a specified amount of domestic emissions.

Table 1. Socio-economic and energy indicators in Cambodia, Laos and Finland (EEP 2010).

	Cambodia	Laos	Finland
Total Population (2005) mil	14	5.7	5.2
GDP per capita (2005), PPP USD	2,727	2,039	32,153
Population below 1USD/day poverty line	34.1%	27%	n/a
Urban population	19.7%	20.6%	61.1%
Electricity consumption per capita, kWh	10	126	17,374
Electrification rate (2000-2005)	20%	n/a	100%
People without access to electricity	10,9 mil	n/a	n/a
Share of hydro, wind, geothermal & solar	0,1%	n/a	3.9%
Total CO2 emission (2004), MtCO2	0.5	1.3	65.8
CO2 emissions per capita (2004), tCO2	n/a	0.2	12.6

By the end of the 00's, it was quite apparent that these mechanisms possessed flaws, but more importantly, that these mechanisms did not benefit the least developed countries, and more measures were needed to prevent CO2 levels from reaching a critical concentration in the atmosphere. Another central issue which was raised was that offsetting emissions outside industrialized countries did not challenge the fossil-fuel dependent lifestyles in the developed countries, but provided consumers with an excuse to continue consuming as before, and, as such, these mechanisms were very inefficient (Newell & Paterson 2010, 34 cit. in Castree 2011).

In Copenhagen in 2010, industrialized countries committed to providing an additional 100bn USD annually for developing countries to help them adapt to climate change and to speed up their transition to green or clean economies. Still, this was not a new idea, as climate change had been mainstreamed to most policy fields already for a longer time, including development cooperation policies. Mainstreaming climate change into development cooperation is usually understood as climate proofing policy and projects while keeping targets relatively intact (Gupta & van der Grijp, 2010). This means that the design and implementation of development aid projects take into account the changes that climate change is expected to bring and tries to create climate-friendly or low-carbon development options. Adaptation projects are a direct form of enhancing the capabilities of communities and projects to withstand climate related changes, often trying to identify vulnerable communities. Mitigation aims at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in order to reduce the severity of climate change.

As recognized in the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, developed countries are principally responsible for the current high levels of greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere as a result of more than 150 years of industrial and land-use changing activity. The Kyoto Protocol places a heavier burden on developed nations under the UNFCCC principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The pressing development priorities of the least developed countries in combination with this background makes it obvious that developing countries do not have a similar interest in mitigation and are therefore unlikely to have ownership of this issue as a key political priority. Many justice-based and critical scholars, along with a great number of global popular movements, NGOs and developing countries have pointed out that the majority of cuts to current emissions need to be achieved in the industrialized countries, and that cuts in developing countries should supplement, not offset, these cuts. (See e.g. CAN 2009; Lohmann 2008; Anand 2004.)

It is argued that two-thirds of the world's greenhouse gas emission reduction potential through 2030 is located in developing countries. The main question in the development and climate change debate has been whether climate change and development assistance can be integrated, and if they can, how it should be done. This debate has implications for the practical question of whether climate funding should strictly be additional to development assistance in search of standardized ODA accounting. The Kyoto Protocol brought about a normative commitment that climate funding should be new and additional to existing official development assistance. Still, after Kyoto developing country officials have continued to repeat a worry that development funds

are being diverted for climate related activities. In spite of the continued importance of this discussion, there is already evidence that climate funding is, to some extent, replacing development assistance and pledges for development funding. Finland is a case in point, declining from previous ambitious aid targets to the definition of accounting all climate-related financing together with ODA.

A brief by Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America and the British Overseas Development Institute (ODI 2010) gives a clear definition for what “new and additional” stands for. Funding for climate change should be additional to existing ODA commitments and other pre-existing flows from the industrialized countries to developing countries in order to avoid the diversion of funds. Commonly, this is understood to be above the 0.7 percent of gross national income commitment that is the minimum requirement for achieving development targets. This is a target which has been unfulfilled by most developed countries since 1970. A quick look at some figures helps to give a better idea of this issue. According to an AidWatch report in 2010 the average for 27 European countries for ODA was 0.42 percent. Bosch (2009 cit. in Drakenberg & Cesar 2009; see also Brown et al. 2010) estimates that the total public funds for climate change mitigation and adaptation purposes are at around 10 billion USD per year in developing countries. About fifty percent of this is ODA marked for mitigation. Climate Funds Update (2010), on the other hand, has calculated that 82 percent of all approved (distinctly different from *promised*) funding for climate change has gone for mitigation projects.

Linking mitigation to development activities carries some risk of trade-offs between their respective goals, as compared to linking adaptation with development (Gupta 2009, 209). There are also apparent risks that the additionality that climate finance is supposed to have will not be realized when mitigation activities are integrated with development aid. This is more apparent with the LDCs that have negligible emissions when compared with the developed countries or emerging economies such as China, India or Brazil. The UNFCCC principle that climate finance needs to be new and additional is largely supported by developing countries in order to guarantee that the industrialized countries fulfill their commitments (Ayers & Huq 2009, 680.)

Ayers and Huq (2009) point out that achieving the MDGs will improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable communities and individuals and, therefore, will also enhance their ability to engage in adaptive action. The discussion on mainstreaming climate change into development cooperation is based on the idea that human vulnerability to climate change is reduced when successful

adaptation takes place and climate change is mitigated while simultaneously improving the living conditions of those vulnerable. There is no real conflict between the short terms goals of immediate issues that development policies are aimed at and the long-term goals of protecting livelihoods from the impacts of climate change. (Klein et al. 2005, 584.) This is also the approach the EEP has adopted. Still, adaptation to climate change is expected to have more synergies with poverty alleviation than mitigation primarily through the conservation of arable land, the protection against natural disaster and its impact on health (Michaelowa & Michelowa 2007, 5).

Klein et al (2005) argue that adaptation is harder to measure than mitigation, and, therefore, it might be easier to channel funding for adaptation when integrated with mitigation. On top of being somewhat unfocused, this might also be analyzed as a strategy to legitimize the use of ODA for mitigation. It is important to keep in mind, however, that a clear separation of mitigation from adaptation cannot be done in all cases. This is the stance of a number of forestry experts. At the same time, while there is no direct political ownership of the issue of climate mitigation, many agriculturally dependent countries' future growth and many poor communities' resilience and methods of income-improvement might be undermined by the changes climate change is expected to cause (Persson 2009).

2.3. The role of energy in development

Objectives for development cooperation have been most clearly codified in the MDGs, endorsed by 189 countries in 2000. This is also the anchor of Finnish development policy: the key to poverty reduction is sustainable development. MDGs are measurable targets for achieving a number of targets considered key in development, such as curing sickness, raising income levels and the like. Adaptation discussions have, however, recently challenged this perspective by talking about resilience and resilient ways of life.

Linking mitigation to development activities carries some risk of trade-offs at least in two aspects, first: if the additionality principle is not honored. This is most apparent with the LDCs that have negligible emissions compared with the developed countries or emerging economies. Second, development cooperation projects linking mitigation and poverty reduction always pose the risk that climate change mitigation becomes the focus, leaving the poverty reduction component to a secondary position.

While rural energy generation projects can bring real development benefits for the local population, they are usually not efficient in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This is obvious

when one considers that rural households do not have much energy consumption as long as they are not connected to an electricity grid, but depend on local small-scale energy production. Large scale emission reduction projects can usually be carried out with lower costs for the same level of outcome in terms of emission cuts. To curb emissions growth, it would be sensible to target middle-class energy consumption in countries that are about to achieve the MDGs by introducing energy efficiency standards and policies once sales of appliances take off (Urban 2009, 683). By electrifying rural schools and hospitals the same results in this respect cannot be achieved. This shows that climate policy that targets limiting the emissions of developing countries is most efficient when it targets the middle-class, as well as countries that have reached a certain level of development. (Michaelowa & Michaelowa 2007, 12–16.) The beneficiaries of climate finance and development aid seems to be different within a national scope as well as on an international level. Those targeted by mitigation are likely to be high polluters, mostly non-LDCs, while those targeted by development aid are primarily the poor.

Energy is not included as such in any of the MDGs, but there are numerous ways in which access to energy can help in achieving the goals. Alleviating energy poverty has been called a prerequisite for fulfilling the MDGs, for example by DFID (2002) and WHO (2006). Clean energy projects can, in addition to reducing emissions, create employment opportunities, reduce time spent on energy provision or reduce air pollution from traditional fuels.

Poverty reduction and sustainable development are the two key principles of Finnish Development cooperation. While sustainable development is a concept that has been widely discussed and seems to be used more as a catch phrase today rather than a concept clearly defining what development should look like, poverty reduction is clearly codified in the Millennium Development Goals with a number of qualitative and quantitative indicators. When it comes to the MDGs, apart from MDG 7⁹, climate change related activities cannot usually be thought of as having an important impact on poverty (Michaelowa & Michaelowa 2007, 11). Naturally, one can build a link from electrification of a community to results in improved reading and lower school dropout rates. However, clearly far better ways to achieve universal education (MDG 2) would be to increase the supply of teachers or start providing free school meals. (See e.g. Glewwe & Kremer 2005.)

⁹ The MDG target 7 prescribes that the principles of sustainable development should be integrated into country policies and programs and to reverse loss of environmental resources.

2.4. The Energy and Environment Partnership with the Mekong Region

To provide a sufficient understanding of the EEP Mekong I shall give a brief description here of the central features and objectives of the program. I will not give a full presentation of all the aspects in the program, but, rather, try to give an overview and then focus on issues that are relevant for understanding the program as a mechanism of norm diffusion. In the analysis, a deeper look at the program structure will be given through the norms under scrutiny in this research.

The program aims to promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficiency and clean technologies by providing improved access to modern energy and combating climate change. It's initiated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (FORMIN) and funded together with the Nordic Development Fund (NDF), with contributions of 4.9€m and 3€m respectively for the period of 2009–2012. The key objective of the EEP Mekong is poverty reduction and a significant secondary objective is providing environmental aid (FORMIN 2010).

The overall long term objective of the program is “to contribute to improved access to energy and energy services¹⁰ and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions¹¹”. The key indicators reflect the three main parts identified for achieving the overall objective. They are: (1) more people and particularly rural households should have improved access to modern, reliable energy services, (2) renewable sources of energy should constitute a greater share of the total energy and consumption in the Mekong region, and (3) the growth rate of CO2 emissions is reduced. The EEP aims to achieve these objectives through three components which are divided as follows:

1. Support to national policy, legislation and institutional framework
2. Development of renewable energy (RE), waste-to-energy (WTE) and energy efficiency (EE) technologies and services (through partnership projects)
3. Information and capacity building for renewable energy, waste-to-energy, energy efficiency and energy markets.

The EEP has different financing options to support studies, surveys and demonstration projects, feasibility and pre-feasibility studies, policy development, and the dissemination and exchange of information. As such, the aims and objectives of the program are similar to the REEEP (Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Partnership) program, but they differ in geographical focus. The maximum amount the EEP can provide to a single project is 200,000€. Eligible actors for funding range from companies to research centers and from NGOs to consulting firms.

¹⁰ A means towards poverty reduction.

¹¹ The objective of climate change mitigation.

Funding by EEP is provided based on project proposals which are submitted to calls for proposals. The key decision-making body of the EEP is its steering committee, which selects the projects that will receive funding. The steering committee consists of a representative from both of the donors and two representatives from each participating country. Six of the steering committee members have been interviewed for this research. The Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) is responsible for technical assistance, coordination, administration, reporting, and monitoring of the EEP Mekong at regional level. The RCU manages and administers project selection, information services and capacity development for the overall program. The EEP steering committee, which meets twice a year and is responsible to the Supervisory Board for “overseeing the programme management and the achievement of the programme results” (EEP 2010). The EEP has been initiated by Finland, which is also the main financier of the program. All steering committee members have a veto right over any project when the steering committee meets to select projects that will receive funding.

In the analysis, I will turn to look at how the norms studied in this research are presented in the program document and how they reflect quite well the objectives set in the Finnish Development Policy Programme (FORMIN 2007). This will be done in order to analyze the level of institutionalization of the norms in question. This can be separated from the analysis of the projects that the EEP is funding as I will take the projects to reflect the internalization of the norms. These are two distinctly different levels, as what is written in the program document does not necessarily reflect what is actually being done. Although this research did not involve going to the sites of actual implementation, I take the descriptions of the projects by their implementers to reflect what is actually being done. This corresponds with how Risse et al (1999) and Allden (2009) have described and analyzed the difference between institutionalization and internalization of norms in the process of norm diffusion.

Five projects were selected from the First Call for Proposals, of which four are located in Cambodia and the Lao PDR. The project leaders or projects’ representatives were interviewed in this research. There is one technologically focused project in each country. In Cambodia Kamworks, a social enterprise of Dutch origins, aims at improving access to solar for rural electrification in Cambodia by removing financial and technical barriers. The project focus is on demonstrating solar lanterns and solar home systems use and introducing a microloan scheme designed for purchasing these solar technologies. In the Lao PDR Electriciens sans frontières, a French NGO specializing in sustainable access to energy, is installing pico-hydro turbines into 24 villages in a remote province

of the Lao PDR. In addition the project is training technicians to ensure maintenance of the pico-hydros. The aim of the project is to extend into Cambodia later on.

The two other projects are geared towards capacity building and raising awareness. In Cambodia the Cambodian Climate Change Department, which is a Department of the Cambodian Ministry of Environment, has a project in Siem Reap in which the aim is to promote and demonstrate energy conservation and energy efficiency. The activities are geared towards the general public and public institutions such as schools and hospitals. The awareness raising is focusing on solar water heaters and compact fluorescent lamps. In the Lao PDR Finland Futures Research Centre is carrying out capacity building at the Ministry of Energy and Mines. The project's focus is on energy data collection and development of energy planning models.

This chapter has aimed to introduce the general themes explored in this study and set the context for the issues. The findings of the role of norms in the EEP will be reflected against the context set in this chapter. As I will not explore implementation per se, but how it is described by the actors, I find it sufficient to only give an overview of the projects as I have presented here. Naturally, looking deeper into actual implementation could provide us with different results. However, as the focus of this research is to study how the norms influence the processes and how the actors understand them, I find providing more information of the projects secondary, presuming that the norms and actions described reflect what does actually goes on. For looking at how capacity building should be implemented this approach would probably be insufficient, but as I am more interested in what the EEP is doing and how internationally agreed norms influence the program, I find looking at the program through the norms to give a valuable insight into the roles the norms have in the program and its projects. The aim is to show how the internationally institutionalized norm of climate change mitigation actually governs and informs the EEP and its activities.

3. Theory

The theoretical aim of this research is to analyze how a Finnish development cooperation program, the Energy and Environment Partnership (EEP) in the Mekong Region, works as a mechanism of norm diffusion, how actors related to the program transform norm content in the process and how the norms studied influence the program and activities carried by its funding. All of the norms are clearly visible in all stages analyzed, but as will be shown in chapter five, the

norms are sometimes understood differently at different levels. Diffusion will be analyzed in terms of what meanings and definitions actors attach to the norms. This will be reflected against theories of norm diffusion and it will serve as an indicator of how the practical objectives of the program can be expected to be fulfilled.

From a constructivist point of view, the role of a funding mechanism such as the EEP is not limited to providing financial and technical support, but it also performs a function in conveying ideas and values. The research will be done by focusing on three different norms: ownership, mitigation and poverty reduction. I will develop a theoretical framework based on existing literature on the topic for analyzing the diffusion of these norms, and how they transform through framing by different actors in this process.

The norms selected can be found in international agreements that govern development cooperation and climate change. The scope of this research does not extend into analyzing how these norms have come about and how they have evolved in their early stages. I will simply point to an international point of institutionalization for the norms, which will, for the purpose of this study, function as the origins of the norms. This will be done in chapter five. These norm origins will define the content of each norm at its starting point for this paper and also demonstrate its international institutionalization. This will serve as the starting point for analyzing norm diffusion in this research. The main focus will be on how the norms are understood by different actors in the EEP. The assumption is that these norms only become meaningful and gain content through the meanings that actors give them or by actions carried out. I take the described behavior of the projects to reflect and implicate the influence the studied norms have on the activities. These will be used to evaluate how the norms are internalized within the EEP.

The research program on norm diffusion has covered extensively different stages of the process. However, the level of analysis has often focused on how states adopt international norms, and only recently more attention has been paid to the processes and the role of individuals within countries.

As such, this research will be a part of two overlapping, but somewhat distinct, discussions on norms. It will be an analysis of a case of a developed donor country promoting international norms through its development cooperation in developing countries.¹² It will also be a case of the recent

¹² The key distinction in their identities for this study is whether they are a developing country or an industrialized country.

trend of integrating climate change perspectives into development cooperation. In neither case can Finland be expected to represent a special case. Development cooperation is an everyday practice of all industrialized countries in which they all adhere to a number of different international norms governing the field, although with variation in terms of foci and implementation. Also, integrating climate change into development cooperation is becoming a common practice among states, although this practice is still contested to some extent.

The function of this chapter is threefold. It sets the theoretical background assumptions necessary for the research, and by doing so, it attaches this research to the wider context in which norms are studied. This chapter also defines what is being studied and what is not, who are the actors beings studied and what their influence on the norms is. Thirdly, this chapter introduces and defines the central theoretical concepts relevant for the research.

I will start by introducing constructivism as a theory of International Relations. This will briefly lay out the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions. I will then introduce the concept of a norm and explore what the meaning of norms in international relations is. An overview of the relationship between ideas and norms will be given before moving on to different models used to explain norm diffusion. This serves to understand how this research fits into the larger context in which norms are studied. Therefore, this chapter will also give an overview of the research program dealing with norms in IR. The norms studied in this research are taken to be dynamic rather than static. Norm content and internalization are central for this research and will be introduced. Finally, I will summarize and give an adopted model of norm diffusion for the purpose of this research.

3.1. Constructivism

As a starting point in this study I take that the material world exists independently of human beings (Wendt 1999, 47). Nature is the material foundation on which society is organized (ibid., 51) but unlike natural things, social phenomena are constituted mostly by ideas people hold (ibid., 68). According to constructivism, social reality exists and is constructed through social interaction. These interactions create and can change the status quo as well as changing actors' identities (Wendt 1992).

Social interactions maintain the structures that tell actors what can be done. The prevailing order in the international system also sets boundaries and constrains for actors' behavior. Actions become meaningful by how other actors interpret them. Social relations based on interactions

give actors' their identities. As such, social reality exists only between the intersubjective meanings that actors in the system hold for it (ibid.). Identities are meaningful in relation to other actors and their identities. Norms shape interaction through which actor identities also change (Jepperson et al. 1996, 46). Social facts exist because "people collectively believe they exist and act accordingly" (Finnemore & Sikkink 2001, 393). They are real because they have material consequences. I do not negate material facts but rather make the claim that understanding how material realities gain meaning through social interaction helps in understanding, for example, the issue of climate change. (Pettenger 2007a, 6.)

Norm-centered approaches have been called soft constructivism as the approach often relies on rationalism and positivist methodology (Pettenger 2007a, 9). In this study I take norms to appear as social structures. They guide meanings but are also redefined by actors in social settings (ibid.). Norms are created and maintained by social interaction and they tell actors what kind of behavior is expected of them in a given situation. Norms also help to define how an actor is situated in the international system and what it can expect from the system. (Wendt 1992.) From a constructivist point of view the spread of ideas and beliefs define the structure of the international system. In this ideational world the changes in ideas and norms are the most important vehicles for structural changes. (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 894.)

This means that actors are shaped by their social interaction by ontological assumption (Finnemore & Sikkink 2001, 394). The focus of constructivism has usually been on facts that have no material basis, while competing theories have been based on materialist assumptions and assumed that action can be derived from the physical world (Finnemore & Sikkink 2001, 393). For constructivists, material factors are not irrelevant, but they matter through the cognitive and communicative processes in which actors determine their identities (Risse et al., 1999, 7).

Constructivism makes claims about the nature of social life and how change can come about, but it does not specify the content of these changes. It offers a framework for thinking. The research agenda can be summarized as focusing on "the role of ideas, norms, knowledge, culture, and argument in politics, stressing in particular the role of collectively held or 'intersubjective' ideas and understandings on social life" (Finnemore & Sikkink 2001, 393).

3.2. Norms

Research on ideas and norms has focused on question such as (Berman 2001; Finnemore & Sikkink 1998):

- a) How do we know ideas and norms make a difference?
- b) How do we recognize a norm when we see one?
- c) Where do new ideas and norms come from and how do they rise to prominence?
- d) How do norms become institutionalized?
- e) How, why do ideas and norms matter in any particular circumstance?
- f) How do norms change?

This research will focus on how norms diffuse and change but in order to understand what norms are, how they influence behavior and what norm change means, I will try to answer the questions presented above in the following chapters.

Norms have been defined as “shared expectations held by a community of actors about appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity” (Khargram 2002, 13; Katzenstein 1996, 54). The idea of shared expectations resonates closely with “notions of appropriate behavior” (Bernstein 2001) and “a standard for appropriate behavior” (McIntosh Sundstrom 2005, 424; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 891) and is still similar to “rule-like prescriptions which are both clearly perceptible to a community of actors and which makes behavioral claims upon those actors” (Allden 2009, 17). A more specific definition defines norms as “ideas of varying degrees of abstraction and specification with respect to fundamental values, organizing principles or standardized procedures that resonate across many states and global actors, having gained support in multiple forums including official policies, laws, treaties or agreements” (Krook & True 2010, 2). Based on these definitions, I define norms in this research as *shared expectations about appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity*.

I want to emphasize that the expectations are in plural because they are held by a number of actors, not because the norm prescribes different expectations. In this research, a norm prescribes a single appropriate behavior although that behavior can have different ways of being implemented and actualized. The point is that, for example, sovereignty – although often spoken of as a norm – is not a norm, but a collection of norms, an institution. For poverty reduction, appropriate behavior reduces poverty, but the way in which it reduces poverty can vary, be it by providing education or guaranteeing loans for micro-entrepreneurs. Naturally, the outcomes can be debated, as there is (yet) no single way to reduce poverty, and as such the issue is contingent. However, I do not see this posing an analytical obstacle that could not be overcome.

Appropriateness is only defined by the judgment of a community or a society in question (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 891–2). This is the essence of intersubjectiveness in a constructivist approach. For a practical application of this principle the exact appropriate behavior in question that each studied norm in this research prescribes will be given at the end of this chapter where I turn to the operationalization of my research.

Actors can be anything ranging from a woman in a rural village to a local decision-maker, and from a head of state to a state itself, be it a country like Cambodia or Finland. To a large extent, this will depend on the approach chosen for a research. As actors hold multiple identities, determining for which of these identities the norm prescribes behavior to can be a daunting task. However, in this research, the analysis will be on content given to norms by actors in a certain position in relation to the EEP program, which subscribes them their identities. The greatest focus will be on Finland as an industrialized country and Cambodia and the Lao PDR as LDCs. The specificities will be given where necessary for understanding the context and sticking to academic rigor.

Appropriate behavior in a given situation varies according to the identity of the actor. For example, different behaviors are expected of a student and a professor during a lecture. The fact that a single norm can prescribe different behavioral standards for different actors will be dealt with as the specific prescriptions that a norm subscribes are explored later on. For example, the norm of ownership tells Finland that appropriate behavior is to respect the national priorities of Cambodia, while for Cambodia it means exercising effective control and leadership over its policies and strategies.

Where an institution refers to a collection or a set of rules and procedures, a norm is a single behavioral standard (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 891). The distinction between rules and norms is that rules take the form “Do X to get Y,” whereas norms say “Good people do X”. Hence, actors can be expected to follow norms because they want to identify themselves as “good” in the eyes of their peers (Fearon 1999 & Risse et al 1999, 8). Since a norm defines the standard for appropriate behavior, its intersubjective, prescriptive and evaluative dimensions are central to understanding the concept. It is the “quality of ‘oughtness’ that sets norms apart from other kind of rules” (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 891). Norms only tell what appropriate¹³ behavior should be, not how actors actually behave all the time (Bernstein 2001, 30), and while norms shape the

¹³ The idea of appropriateness is familiar to rationalists, who think of norms as introducing constraints that alter rational means-ends logic. This changes how actors calculate how to achieve their interests (Cortell & Davis 1996, 475).

interests of actors, they also shape the means considered to achieve these interests (Florini 1996, 366).

A common application used to assess the impact of norms on actors' behavior has been to analyze how actors comply with the behavior proscribed by norms found in international treaties, conventions or declarations. (Risse et al. 1999; Bernstein 2001.) Norms are by no means limited to these, as there are also implicit norms and rules that influence the behavior of states and NGOs in the international domain (Nadelmann 1990, 480).

Generally speaking, states and actors can be expected to behave according to norms because their identity tells them that it is the right thing to do. Apart from this, states do not adopt norms only because they are found in international treaties or because other states might pressure them to comply. International norms can also affect states' behavior via domestic actors. Domestic actors tend to refer to international norms when pushing for their agenda on a domestic level. (Cortell & Davis 1996, 471; Finnemore & Sikkink 1998.) While many international norms serve the needs of states for coordination and stability of expectations there is also a subset of international norms that limit states ability to treat individuals, groups or the environment for example, the way they please (Khagram et al. 2002, 14).

There is no point in denying that there can be material gains for states that seem to adhere to international norms, and that most states value the legitimacy gained by complying with international norms (Thomas 2002, 73). Many constructivists argue that "the material and ideational are complexly interwoven and interdependent" (Hay 2001, 7 cit. in Pettenger 2007a, 6). As such the power of material realities are not denied, but this viewpoint helps in understanding "how material realities gain meaning through social interaction" (ibid.). Another important point is that actors sometimes adopt norms without obvious material incentives (Checkel 1998, 331).

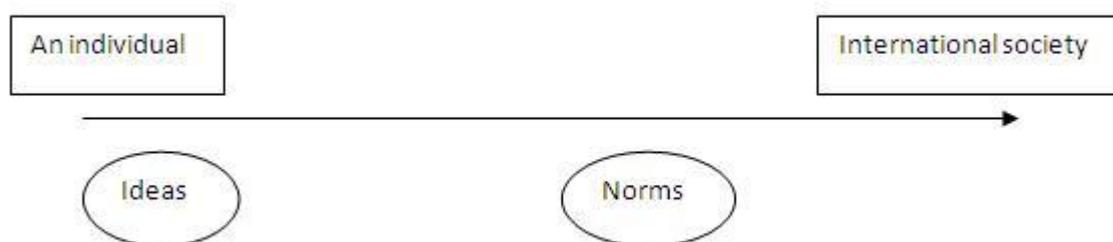
3.2.1. Ideas - norms

The literature on norms distinguishes between ideas, which are beliefs held by individuals, and norms, which are intersubjective beliefs about appropriate behavior. Another distinction central to the research program is between causal ideas and principled ideas. Causal ideas are ideas about cause and effect, while principled ideas are ideas held by an individual about right and wrong. (Jepperson et al. 1996, 54; Khagram et al 2002, 14.) Causal ideas are supported by evidence, often scientific, while principled ideas are beliefs held about right and wrong. Once principled ideas

become accepted by a broad range of actors, they become “norms”, which are intrinsically intersubjective and held by a society or a community (Khagram et al. 2002, 14).

While some authors make a clear point that norms need to be institutionalized in order to be norms (Khagram et al. 2002, 14; Bernstein 2001, 246), authors that are more concerned with norm change, framing and transformation are content without categorically distinguishing norms from ideas (Krook & True 2010, 2; Acharaya 2004, 241). I will also adopt this view and claim that norms can be seen as being at a different point on the same line with ideas. Not just any idea will do. Ideas form a category in which norms can be thought of as being a subcategory of ideas, a particular type of idea. What is crucial is that ideas that are being studied indicate what appropriate behavior looks like. While at the one end of the line are ideas which are held by an individual or a small number of individuals, at the other end can be found “strong” or fundamental norms to which states collectively adhere, see Figure 1.¹⁴

Figure 1. Ideas – norms.



The problem with this figure is that it is one dimensional and as such can be seen as reflecting the assumption that the idea develops into a norm without changes in content, which is contrary to the point I intend to make. However, I hope the figure will illustrate the similarities of ideas and institutionalized norms and their relationship in terms of the number of actors adhering to it. This approach that focuses on changes in norm content is similar to the one taken by Krook & True who emphasize that even institutionalized norms are dynamic and contested rather than unchanging, even after they have become embedded in institutional practices (2010, 3–4).

Once a norm becomes institutionalized, it is by definition collective, and this gives the norm in question its assumed legitimacy, even though some actors might violate the norm at times. (Bernstein 2001, 30). Institutionalized norms can be found in international conventions,

¹⁴ I use the concept of international society to refer to the theoretical idea of all actors. No other reference to the English school intended.

declarations and intergovernmental treaties¹⁵, but are not limited to these. Still, not all issues are governed by treaties, as also “soft laws, policy guidelines and statements may serve as indicators of international norms.” (Khagram et al. 2002, 15.) The level of institutionalization that a norm possesses matters in terms of the political authority it has. Institutionalized norms constitute social structures and as such define which political institutions are seen as appropriate (Bernstein 2001, 30).

Some studies have argued that norms that have become institutionalized, surviving continuous challenges, and norms that are clear and specific in content – rather than ambiguous or complex in what they prescribe – are likely to be effective (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 906–7). Still, norms are rarely well specified in international treaties, and this also improves the likelihood of international treaties being signed (Wiener 2009, 198). However, a consensus on an issue that is vague in content makes it harder to distinguish behavior that violates against the norm (Krook & True 2010, 8).

Norms have been categorized in a number of ways and the most common distinction has been between regulative norms and constitutive norms. Regulative norms order and constrain behavior while constitutive norms create actors and identities (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 891). The purpose of categorization is to help understand different properties that norms have. All the norms that are at the focus of this research are studied as regulative, even if they can also have constitutive dimensions. Another useful categorization of norms for this research organizes norms according to what kind of behavior they prescribe and how general they are in their content. Wiener (2009) presented the latter norms in three groups, which are: (1) Fundamental norms, such as sovereignty and rule of law, (2) Organizing principles (e.g. transparency and gender mainstreaming) and (3) Standardized procedures (e.g. unanimous decisions and proportional representation). Fundamental norms include basic procedural norms commonly applied in IR theory. They are general in content, but lack specification. Standardized procedures are very specific and harder to contest on moral grounds. Organizing principles are situated in between these categories. They guide policy practices and inform political procedures, but also evolve in these processes, and they are the focus of this research. (183–5.) I take ownership as falling into this latter category of organizing principles, while poverty reduction and mitigation are more of organizing principles.

¹⁵ Which I call collectively agreements in this study, as mentioned earlier.

3.2.2. Norm evolution

I will now turn to how norms evolve and how this has been studied, so as to place this research into the larger context of IR and particularly the study of norms.

Norms do not exist and evolve in a vacuum. The social relationships between states maintain the intersubjectively shared understandings of appropriate behavior, which creates the environment in which new norms¹⁶ emerge, are tested and can gain legitimacy. The success of a new norm is dependent on how coherent it is with existing norms and social structures. This social environment sets limits for the direction in which norms are likely to evolve and what kinds of new norms are likely to emerge. The environment consists of established and institutionalized norms already in place. (Florini 1996, 376–7.) New norms are in competition with one another and they sometimes carry incompatible instructions (Florini 1996, 362–3). Norm change is expected to be cumulative meaning that once a certain form of a norm gains certain sufficient support it is likely to develop in that direction. Once a norm has become widely accepted it also becomes more enduring and closed towards change (Florini 1996).

This could lead one to assume that norms are fixed in content. However, this is not always the case. Norms do not always have their intended effects, and they are subject to contestation in political processes (Krook & True 2011, 2). A number of different models have been developed to account for norm diffusion and how norms are adopted, such as how states and national actors become socialized to international norms. The concept of norm diffusion has been used to describe how norms diffuse from international treaties to domestic settings. Often, these models have assumed norms to be static and have paid little attention to how norms can change during these processes. Models of norm diffusion that focus on how norms emerge and become institutionalized have fared better on this account, but often fail to explain where the norms come from.

One obvious analytical problem for studying norms is that actors and structures shape and influence norms, but at the same time norms influence actors' behavior and interests. Also, other norms form the environment in which new norms must prevail. (Florini 1996.) For carrying out an empirical research, these problems have most often been overcome by assigning some norms as structures and others as dependent variables, but the way in which norms interact has received little attention in empirical studies (Krook & True 2010). My study does not include a time span

¹⁶ I use the term "new norms" to refer to norms which have yet to gain wide support. They are located somewhere along the continuum between ideas and institutionalized norms.

and is therefore void of accounting for two-way interaction of this kind, but I will shed some light on the compatibility and the relationships of the norms studied here. For theoretical understanding of norms, I also felt obliged to include this idea into this paper.

I now turn to norm diffusion. I will again start by giving a definition and will then move on to show how different models of norm diffusion relate to each other in describing different phases and mechanisms of the process in which norms emerge and actors internalize norms. This section aims to shed light on different phases of a norm's life cycle¹⁷. This will help to specify the scope of this research and it will situate this research within the research program on norms.

3.3. Different models of norm diffusion

The mechanisms by which actors internalize norms vary from unprompted norm adoption to different levels of persuasion, to norms being “taught” to actors. Regardless of the reasons that make actors adopt and internalize norms I will use diffusion as a general term to describe this process. Allden uses a definition for diffusion citing Hughill and Dickson (1988, 263–264 in Allden 2009, 17) which is “transfer or transmission of objects, processes, ideas and information from one population or region to another.” Börzel and Risse define diffusion as “a process through which ideas are spread across time and space” (2009, 5). Adapted from these, norm diffusion is defined and studied in this research as *a process through which ideas and norms are spread to actors*.

I shall briefly present what is meant by norm tipping points, critical mass and norm cascades. These theories explain how emerging norms are mainly pushed forward by norm entrepreneurs and how norms become internalized. This is how Finnemore & Sikkink (1998) present the norm life cycle. I will then give an overview of the boomerang and spiral models, which are used to describe how institutionalized norms can become internalized into domestic setting. I will not treat norms as having a final shape or a form in which they would in other words be ready. Instead, some norms, as the ones in focus in this research, can re-enter a phase in which norm entrepreneurs (re)frame the norms so that they will fit the local setting. As new meanings are attached, this could be seen as triggering norm emergence again, as the new behavioral standards would need to become seen as appropriate. I find it convenient to think of these different models as complementing each other. This will be visualized in Figure 2 at the end of this section.

¹⁷ Finnemore & Sikkink (1998) used the term life cycle to describe how norms emerge, cascade and become internalized. This assumes a static view of norms and an ending point. As such, it's not really a cycle but a line as they presented it (see p.896). I use the concept of a norm life cycle to account for a potentially full cycle, where a norm can change in content and re-enter the phase of norm emergence.

But how do norm entrepreneurs persuade other actors to adhere to norms and what factors contribute to this process? Simply put, norm entrepreneurs frame norms to fit with the existing normative framework and to resonate closely with existing intersubjectively held beliefs. Framing is essential for how ideas emerge and how norms diffuse into domestic settings. If framing is successful the frames given to a norm resonate with the prevailing social structure and are compelling to the wider public, be it the international society or any particular community. (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 897.)

Frames are defined as “specific metaphors, symbolic representations, and cognitive suggest alternative modes of action” (Barnett 1999, 15 cit. in Cass 2007, 24). Frames can function as tools used for defining a problem. A successful framing should make the idea appealing for the relevant audiences (Cass 2007, 24; Payne 2001, 39). Norm entrepreneurs have been said to exploit material levers all the time. The material leverage can come from linking the issue in question for example to monetary incentives (Payne 2001, 41). Norm entrepreneurs can strategically use norms to pursue both material and ideational interests (Cass 2007, 25).

The existing normative order defines appropriateness and as such is the environment in which the new emerging norms must prevail (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 897). Framing and social construction of norms has been claimed to be harder in the international domain than in a domestic setting, as a domestic normative environment can be expected to be more homogenous and have fewer “voices” (Khagram 2002, 13).

3.3.1. Norm emergence, tipping point and cascades

Norm emergence theorizes how new norms enter the international domain. However, I find the idea of new norms to be misleading in the sense that the newness of the norms, in most cases, is comparable or equal to the process of how norms transform¹⁸. In this sense, new norms could be considered as old norms that have been framed in a way that has changed their content sufficiently that they need to be re-legitimized. Regardless, I find norm emergence to be a satisfying starting point for exploring norm stages.

Most studies that have dealt with norm origins have stressed chance occurrence, favorable events, human agency or indeterminacy. Two elements are commonly seen to be involved in a successful

¹⁸ Admittedly this viewpoint has an analytical short-coming in how to distinguish between a transformed old norm and a new norm mostly familiar in content. In this research I will not aim to answer this question but instead point to the form and content that norms are given in the studied process.

norm emergence. These are norm entrepreneurs¹⁹ and an organizational platform (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 896). Some studies have also focused on the role of epistemic communities and organizational teaching²⁰ in introducing new norms. (See e.g. Bernstein 2002; Finnemore 1996; Florini 1996; Haas 1992; Nadelmann 1990.) The role of norm entrepreneurs is to persuade a critical mass of states, or other actors, to adopt a norm. Norm entrepreneurs are actors that have a strong notion of what is appropriate or desirable behavior and have the means to push their agenda forward. These entrepreneurs create and frame issues (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 896). Norm entrepreneurs are critical in their role in calling attention to and creating issues by framing them (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 897). Actors do not frame norms only in their rhetoric but also by how they act. (Khagram 2002, 13).

Reasons for conforming to norms vary but can include “a pressure to conformity, desire to enhance international legitimation, and the desire of state leaders to enhance their self-esteem” (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 895). The normative weight of states is unequal, and even without this fact, it is unclear when exactly a tipping point or a critical mass is reached. However, I find this idea to sufficiently explain how a norm can become prominent. (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, 901.) To reach a sufficient threshold an emergent norm usually becomes institutionalized in international rules and organizations (Bernstein 2001, 30). Institutionalization also gives a strong indication of what the norm constitutes exactly and what would be a violation against the norm. Still, institutionalization is not a precondition and may as well follow norm cascade (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 900).

3.3.2. Boomerang and spiral models

Risse et al. (1999) have presented a five-stage spiral model to describe how states adopt international human rights norms under pressure from international actors. The model serves as a tool for analyzing how a state positions itself in relation to the norm in question. At first stage the state gives no recognition for the norm. After this the norm becomes contested, as the state in question denies the validity of the norm. This can be detected from arguments given for not adhering to the norm. If the process goes forward, the norm becomes a part of the rhetoric used by the state, but nothing necessarily happens in practice. In the next stage, policy changes can follow and the norm will be institutionalized, which can mean that the state will ratify international treaties concerning the issue and include the norm into national legislation. In the

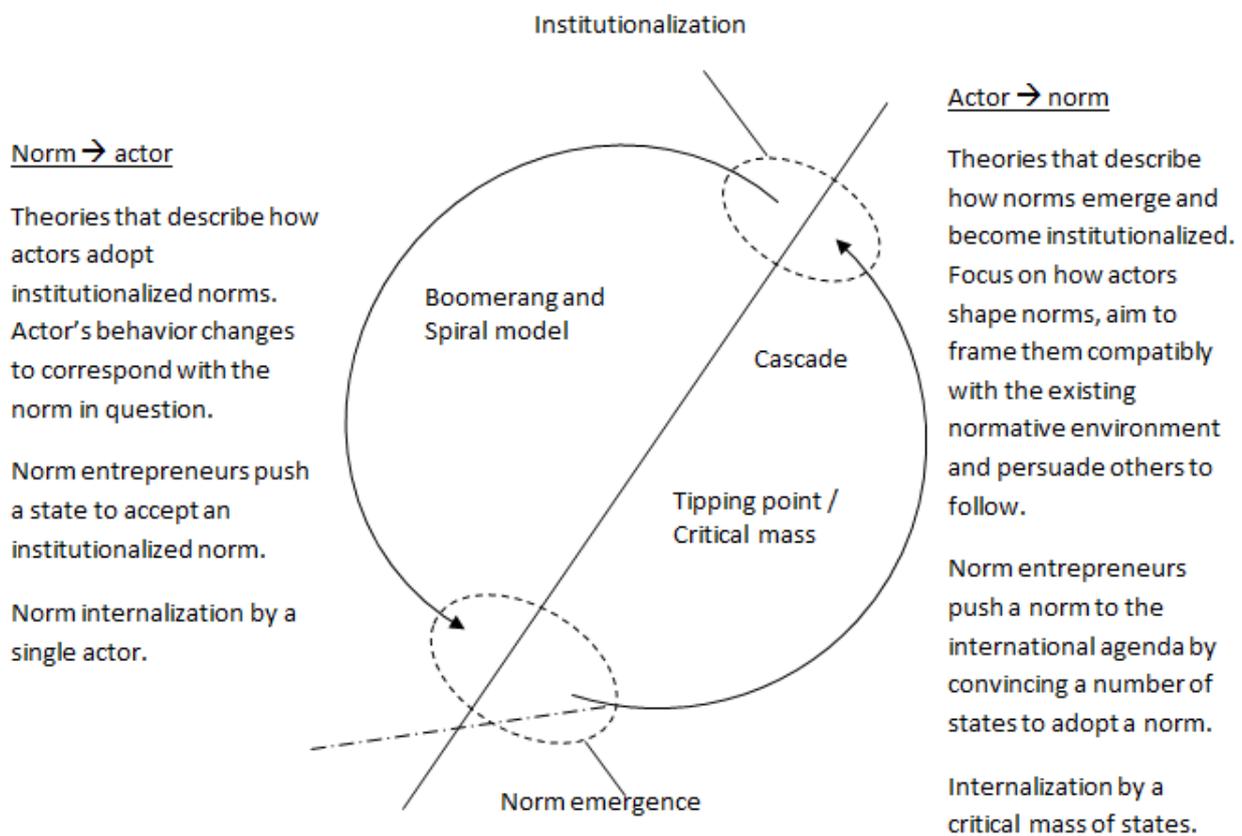
¹⁹ Also called principled activists by Keck & Sikkink (1998).

²⁰ In which norm entrepreneurs also play a significant role.

last stage the norm becomes internalized when it gains a taken-for-granted quality, demonstrated by rule-consistent behavior. Naturally the whole spiral might not go through all the way, or some backtracking can take place. All the norms studied in this research fall between the last two levels described in the spiral model.

The boomerang (Keck & Sikkink 1998) mostly describes the relevance of transnational activist networks and how they tend to operate while the spiral model focuses on the external signals a state gives of its adherence to an international norm. These models are not sufficient for explaining what happens within a country in the process.

Figure 2. Theories of norm diffusion.



All of these models have received critique, and they do have their short-comings. I find that most of the critique misses the point to some extent in only detailing what these models cannot explain, as very few theories of IR are actually all-encompassing. I find these theories to be complementary with each other as they all illustrate a different aspect of the norm diffusion. In Figure 2 I have

tried to visualize how these different models relate to each other. Norm emergence can start from a redefinition of an existing norm or from an external event.

The theories presented above all describe a part of a norm's life cycle. The practical reason I see for this is that as actors shape norms, which in turn constrain actors' behavior (i.e. change actors' identities), accounting for all processes is not an easy task, especially not in a single model. This holds also for the fact that existing norms influence the emergence of new norms. Successful new norms will eventually become part of the normative environment, which sets boundaries for how other existing norms can transform.

These theories have been roughly divided in this same figure in terms of what direction the norm seems to be traveling. Norm tipping points and cascades describe the process in which norms are shaped by actors constrained by the existing normative environment. They explain how norms are formed, what limits exist in this process and how norms can eventually become institutionalized. They focus on how norms emerge. Boomerang and spiral models take internationally institutionalized norms as their starting point and focus on how they can influence and change actors. I would prefer to call norm emergence, tipping points, thresholds, critical mass and cascades bottom-up approaches. In this sense boomerang and spiral model are top-down processes. As such, all of these models deal with norm diffusion, the difference being in which direction the norm travels.

The end result of successful norm emergence and institutionalization is norm internalization. Norm internalization means that a norm gains a "taken-for-granted" quality so that actors rarely contest or problematize conforming to the norm. For this reason they become powerful, as their legitimacy goes uncontested. They also become hard to discern due to the lack of serious discussions on whether or not to conform. (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 904.) Legislation and bureaucracy function as the main instruments for internalization. These institutions can socialize people to value certain things over others (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998).

Naturally, I have given a generalized presentation of these models. To some extent, they contain elements which also deal with parts of the norm life cycle other than those attributed to them in my visualization. Some of the top-down models acknowledge that local actors also shape and frame the norms to fit with the local environment of norms, values and principles. Generally, all of these models depict a static view in which either norms have influence over actors, or actors and existing norms have influence over emerging norms. I prefer to think of norms as dynamic, with

the direction of influence exerted not being limited. The implications of this have rarely been explored, and this has only recently risen to the agenda, with the focus now on the processes.

The intent of this chapter was to give an overview of how norm diffusion has been theorized in order to place my research within the research program. These elements will also be utilized later on.

3.4. The norms in this research

In a book called *The social construction of climate change: power, knowledge, norms, discourses* (Pettenger 2007b), the authors explore the social processes related to the conceptualization of climate change, what it is and how its causes and consequences are constructed. Climate change is understood differently by different actors and it also has different meanings in varying settings. I also approach the question of climate change from a social perspective rather than looking at the physical phenomena of it. In the book, Cass²¹ calls this *a CO2 emission reduction commitment* norm and points out that from the mid-1980s, norm entrepreneurs started building support for a norm requiring developed states to accept this commitment (2007, 27-48). He notes that the USA, Germany and the UK originally accepted²² that industrial states were historically responsible and should make commitments. An important factor in each country was public acceptance of the issue. Pre-existing political norms and framing in each country affected the speed with which the norm was adopted into domestic settings (Cass 2007, 46).

Cass calls this norm a reduction commitment norm, for which appropriate behavior was to commit to CO2 emission reductions. Here I will use climate change mitigation norm as prescribing that **industrialized countries should mitigate climate change in order to reduce its severity**. I see this as reflecting the spirit of the Kyoto Protocol and the UNFCCC and also to be a useful and convenient formulation as I will not focus on amounts mitigated or the time frame within which the activities take place. This also refers to the overall objective, not to any specific means. It also points out that this behavior is appropriate for industrialized countries, which is an identity I consider Finland to hold, but not Cambodia or Laos. As such, the norm has properties attributed to causal ideas in that they are supported by scientific evidence; climate change will cause severe changes to the world as we know it (IPCC 2007). It also has properties of principled ideas by defining that it is up to the industrialized countries to act on the issue.

²¹ And also e.g. Hattori (2007, 75–97).

²² Although under the Bush administration the USA rejected the norm again

Fukuda-Parr & Hulme (2011) explain the emergence of the MDGs and how they became established. They treat the MDGs as a vehicle which communicates and promotes the objective of ending global poverty. They call the ending of global poverty a supernorm and have named it the antipoverty norm. The MDGs state clear quantifiable goals and objectives in eight different MDGs, that are all individual norms, but which together all aim at the ultimate goal of ending poverty. They define the antipoverty norm in stating that **“extreme, dehumanizing poverty is morally unacceptable and should be eradicated”** (2011, 18). This is also how the norm is understood in this research. The MDGs are not only normative ends, but also instrumental means, in that they reflect research findings which show synergies between the different goals. The eight different goals are all components, which aim for the ultimate objective of poverty reduction (Fukuda-Parr & Hulme 2011, 18). While the eight separate goals specify quantifiable measures, the overall objective is rather a normative end. While climate change mitigation is explicitly referred to as what the industrialized countries should do, poverty reduction does not specify any actors, but rather refers to it as a global responsibility. The antipoverty norm is an idea about what is morally unacceptable, but the norm does not have any obvious causal properties.

While the definitions given above can be contested, there is still a wide consensus on the essence of these ideas, defined as norms in international relations due to their qualities prescribing behavior and agreed on by the vast majority of states. The issue is somewhat more problematic with ownership. It is generally understood as a principle governing all processes within development cooperation. In this research, I take the norm as explicitly stated in the first principle of the Paris Declaration (OECD 2005) stating that: **“partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, strategies and co-ordinate development actions.”**

Ownership in the Paris Declaration refers to country ownership and prescribes appropriate behavior for the partner government²³ and this principle was also enforced in the Accra Agenda for Action (OECD 2008). While the norm of ownership can also be seen as prescribing an outcome, I find it more rewarding to treat it as a means informing processes. Exercising leadership over policies and actions as a means to ensure better outcomes of the policies and actions in question. This is different from the norms of climate change mitigation and poverty reduction which focus on outcomes. The prescription of ownership is also mostly a causal idea. It can be argued that it is

²³ The Paris Declaration uses the term “partner” to refer to the recipients of development cooperation. This is done in order to highlight the equal role of the donor and the recipient. As such, when speaking in reference to the Paris Declaration the term “partner” is used, but in this research, the content of this term is interchangeable with a recipient.

right that developing countries exercise leadership over their own policies and strategies. Understood broadly ownership also refers to democratic ideas about the right to participate into processes that concern one. Still, the norm is formulated based on evidence about what works in development cooperation, and subscribing to the norm serves a function to enhance the effectiveness of development aid.

Approaching ownership as informing processes it interacts with the norms of climate change mitigation and poverty reduction. The link to poverty reduction is apparent as the Paris Declaration aims to improve effectiveness of aid. Aid used for development cooperation, which aims at poverty reduction. Ownership is also relevant for climate change mitigation and corresponds somewhat to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as it states that national development priorities are taken into account. This is what the ownership also prescribes for developing countries, that they need to be in the driver's seat of their own development policies and actions.

3.5. The application used in this research

In this research, norms are shared expectations about appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity and norm diffusion is a process through which ideas and norms are spread to actors. The norms are taken from international agreements and declarations, to which all of the states in question are parties to, along with the majority of states.

Norms are assumed to be dynamic rather than static, meaning that even though they are institutionalized in international treaties and declarations, they have been around for a while and have widely accepted definitions, their content is still evolving. Norms evolve over time in response to competing frames and meanings given to the definition of the norm. They also evolve in interaction with other norms. The normative environment that sets limits for how norms can evolve consists of norms which are also contested. Even as norms are contested and their meaning can change, they still exert influence on other norms. These norms influence the behavior of actors, and, as such, can also be taken as structures for social interaction. The debates surrounding a set of norms can give rise to new norms by purposive actors. Dynamic nature of norms promotes and enables the rise of new norms. From a norm entrepreneur's perspective norms are under constant contestation, the norms might not possess the qualities and behavioral attributes that they were intended to have by the norm entrepreneurs. This view of connecting the evolution, emergence and impacts of norms helps explain the effect they have and how they transform. (Krook & True 2010, 7.)

Through its development cooperation program Finland is the actor which is diffusing the norms in this study. The EEP functions as a mechanism for this purpose, and is the focus of this study. The analysis of the diffusion begins from the content the norms have in the international treaties. The first stage for observing diffusion is done by analyzing Finnish development cooperation guidelines. Presumably, the norms that apply for the type of program that the EEP is are transferred from the guidelines to the program. In any case, this phase will be under scrutiny.

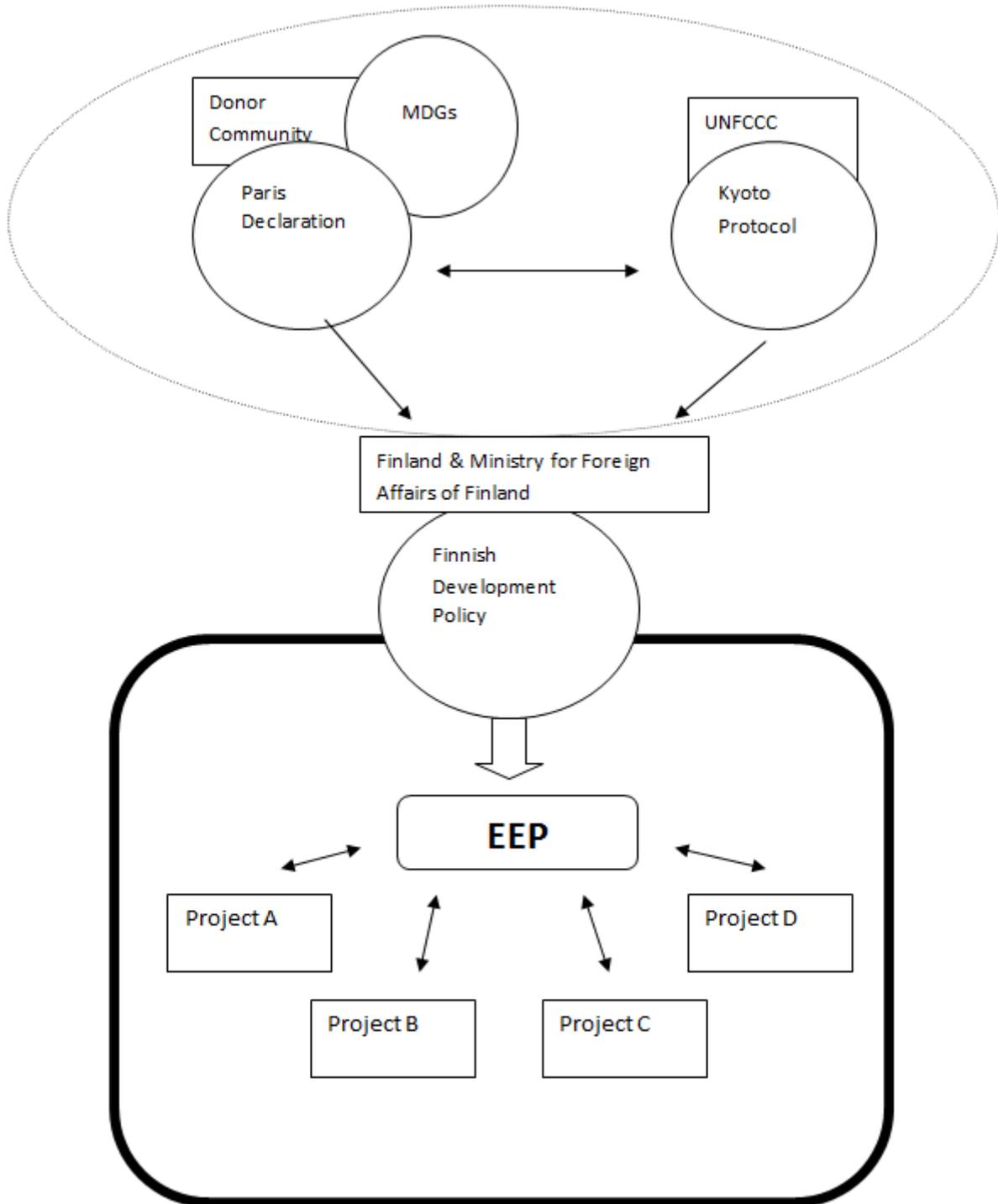
The main focus will be on how the actors related to the EEP understand the norms, how the norms are framed and how the actors operationalize them. This analysis will be based on interviews conducted with the actors as well as program and project documents. I will start from the international treaties and look at how the norms appear in Finnish development policy. After this, two levels can be specified in terms of actors and documentation. First, the donors – Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Nordic Development Fund – and the EEP staff that run and implement the program. I call this “group A”. Their interviews will be reflected against the operationalization of the EEP objectives. Diffusion is observed from the policy guidelines to the EEP. “Group B” consists of the EEP national representatives both in Cambodia and the Lao PDR, and the projects. These are funded by the EEP in order to carry out its functions. The actors in group B have practical functions in interaction with the local population in the recipient countries. The national representatives are mainly taken as representing their own country in the EEP. Diffusion, as well as possible norm internalization will be under focus at this level. Actual implementation or results are not within the scope of this study, but I will draw upon how activities and behavior are described and on reasons given for these.

Figure 3 presents the scope of this research. Actors can be found in quadrangles, and norms are an integral part of the contents of the circles. The arrows indicate the direction of norm diffusion. Finland, as a part of the donor community and the UNFCCC has input in the decisions made and norms formed in the respective arenas, but they are beyond the scope of this research. The upper ellipsis indicates the origins of the norms, again disregarding the processes that have led to the origins of the norms that can be found within the circles. The analysis of this research is located in the box at the bottom of the figure, and it will build on the frames given and created in Finnish development policy documents and also reflect the norm contents at their origins.

The arrows pointing in two directions in the box aim to indicate that this is where norm contestation takes place. Feed-back and wider implications of norm diffusion that carry beyond

the box can only be made in relation to what this study is a case of. As declared in the introduction, this is a case of development cooperation as such, and an example of integrating climate change related norms into other norms governing a certain policy area.

Figure 3. The research setting.



As such, the levels of analysis reflect how the diffusion of norms functions within the given frame. Adherence to the norms can be analyzed with the same tools used for analyzing states and actors'

internalization of and socialization to norms. Different levels of these can also be distinguished. Naturally, it can be expected that norm internalization does not happen overnight in the case of states or individuals but rather is a gradual process.

I want to highlight that norms do not imply what behavior looks like, but what it ought to be. As I will show, strictly speaking the institutionalized norm of climate change mitigation prescribes behavior for states as Parties to the UNFCCC, not to other kinds of actors. Finland, a Party to the UNFCCC, provides funding for actors through the EEP for activities that are seen to fit to the objectives of the EEP, which is primarily a development cooperation program. Hence, the actors financed by the program do not necessarily adhere to the norm of climate change mitigation, or poverty reduction, but I will assume that the activities the projects implement correspond with the objectives of the program. As such, I take the activities and behavior described by the individuals carrying them out to be an indication of appropriate behavior. Appropriate for Finland as an actor, as it makes these activities possible by financing them, and appropriate for the actors carrying them out, as they are executing these from their own initiative.²⁴ The way in which norms are used and referred to should give an implication of the level to which an individual, or a program, adheres. Adherence to the norms in question can also be expected to be an indication of how successful the EEP will be in achieving its objectives, as it can be taken as a sign of commitment by the actor²⁵ in terms of shared understandings of what is being done and how it should be implemented. If norm diffusion does not seem to be happening at all, various reasons can be given in accordance with reference to the theories presented above ranging, from unsuccessful framing to incompatibility with the locally prevalent set of norms to hypothesis about the relationship between norm diffusion and norm content and form.

4. Methodology

This chapter will focus on the methodology used in this research, what kind of assumptions I have made, what issues I faced and how they were resolved. A central purpose explaining and describing the process is to make it possible for the reader to assess the reliability of the findings in this study. The structure of this chapter will mainly follow the order in which the research was carried out.

²⁴ As an individual can consider working to be appropriate behavior for making a living, or a terrorist or a freedom fighter can consider it appropriate to fight an oppressor.

²⁵ Actors' compliance with the norms is also an indication of their identities in terms of their background.

4.1. Case selection

The theme for this thesis was chosen due to two different factors: climate change has become a hot topic in the last decade, and development practitioners and researchers have started paying attention to how climate change is approached in relation to and within developing countries. I had become well acquainted with the issues of climate change and development cooperation through my studies and through internships I had done and also many NGOs have raised concerns about the greening of aid and development finance channeled for climate change related activities. Second, the Finland Futures Research Centre had just started a project investigating different climate finance mechanisms and what their role is in Finnish development cooperation, and they were looking for a Master's thesis student for their team. I applied and chosen for their team. Their focus on the Mekong region set the geographical focus for this Master's thesis, and the EEP seemed to fit perfectly to my interests as a case where climate change and development could be studied. The objective of gathering data that could be policy relevant for the research was somewhat oriented around the data that was expected to be available and possible to collect.

At the point of starting this research the EEP Mekong had just recently been initiated and, therefore, results and impacts could not be assessed and analyzed. Instead it was decided that the analysis would focus on what observations can be drawn from the setup and how the individuals involved in the program see the EEP. As such, the analysis is limited to the projects that were successful in obtaining funding from the First round of Call for Proposals of the EEP Mekong. Although this limits the scope of the study, it provided the possibility to get an early analysis on the EEP Mekong. This was essential for finding areas that might have been neglected, as well as pointing out the strong points of the program, which were an interest of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland funding the research. The practical purpose was to do a policy analysis on the strengths and shortcomings of the EEP and to examine how successful it is in promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency in the region. Choosing norms theory as the approach was based on practical reasons. It was a theory I was somewhat familiar with and it seemed to fit well for examining the EEP, as the program seemed to be strongly influenced by discussions and ideas in the international domain, namely, that measures need to be taken in all policy fields in order to reduce the severity of climate change. Although there is agreement that measures need to be taken, it remains contested among states how exactly these measures should be taken, and by whom.

From this point, a case study approach was a very easy choice. This research is a case of a donor-initiated development cooperation program, funded with ODA, in which climate change has significantly influenced the design of the program. The EEP is seen by many as an example of a successful development cooperation program to which a climate change component is integrated. The focus on Cambodia and the Lao PDR is also illuminating, as they are both LDCs and their circumstances in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and capability to respond to climate change are quite different compared with Thailand and Vietnam, which are also included in the EEP Mekong. Four out of five projects selected from the First Call are located in Cambodia in the Lao PDR, which makes focusing on Cambodia and the Lao PDR justified. This focus helps to demonstrate the point very well of how the norms of climate change mitigation influence behavior in the context of LDCs, even though it is acknowledged that the participation of LDCs should be based on their own initiative and their capabilities.

4.2. Preparing for the interviews

Due to the nature of the topic as well as the fact that the EEP Mekong had just been initiated carrying out interviews was seen crucial as they open up the possibility for gathering information that is beyond the scope of a desk based research. For example, questions concerning political decision making, preparation and unofficial procedures could not be satisfactorily answered without interviewing people that are part of these processes. Documents are mechanisms of governance, but their full meaning rarely opens up completely for outsiders (Mykkanen 2001, 110). Also, documentation was limited at the beginning of the program. Interviews work well when conducted in parallel with the analysis of documentation. Each part brings a different aspect into the big picture and, as such, they are complementary. (See e.g. Allden 2009, 52; Yin 2009 114–118; Mykkanen 2001, 110).

There is a key distinction between a conversation and an interview, namely, that an interview has a predetermined objective of collecting information, while a conversation may be based on spending quality time together. An interviewer sets the conditions for the conversation and the path that will be followed; this is different from a conversation which can take many directions during the course (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 1995, 25). A research interview is one-sided and heading into a predetermined direction as the interviewer aims at getting certain information from the interviewee. The aim of an interview is to gather reliable information on the selected topic (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 1995, 27).

The research started with a planning phase, which consisted of studying the Central American EEP (INDUFOR 2008) to get an overview of the program and previous experiences of the approach taken in the EEP. Desk study which was planned to be conducted before the fieldwork faced some problems due to the poor availability of documentation on the program. Although it was acknowledged that the EEP Mekong had only been initiated in 2009, the lack of up-to-date information on the program and projects at the end of 2010 came as a surprise. The underlying assumption had been that the disclosure policy would have been decided upon at the initiation of the program and that key documents would be available online or at least within reach upon request. However, email correspondence with the Regional Coordination Unit revealed that this was not the case.

Hence, documents that were to be analyzed before the interviews included the EEP Programme Document (EEP 2009a), evaluation grid for applications (EEP 2009b) and the Finnish Development Policy Programme (FORMIN 2007) that spelled out the cross-cutting issues and emphasis that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland has in its development cooperation. These were used for gaining a deeper understanding of the research focus, as well as for selecting themes for the interviews. Presentations were given on all the funded projects in the EEP Mekong Regional forum in Vientiane on October 26–27 2010. These presentations were available online (EEP 2011) and provided the basis for interviewing the projects' leaders or representatives. The research is limited to English documentation. I do not see this as a weakness or affecting the results as the EEP does not operate in any of the local languages, but only in English. As far as I am aware, one-page brochures have been translated into local languages, but nothing else.

During my research, and especially after the interview with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the EEP Mekong published documents and information on their webpage which made most documents finally available. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland also provided me data on request that was not publicly available. As such, there is one key document used in this research, which still was not published before this Master's thesis went into print. This is the latest version of the EEP program document (2010). I received it from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in March 2011 together with a response that the program document would be updated on their website to the latest version as soon as possible.

Key individuals of the EEP Mekong were identified and approached. The people identified for the interviews can broadly be categorized into two groups which are:

1. Donors (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and Nordic Development Fund) and the EEP staff working at the regional coordination unit.
2. National representatives to the EEP and projects that secured funding from the First Call for Proposals²⁶.

The interviewees were selected according to the role they have in relation to the EEP, not as individuals representative of a group, but due to their position (Merton et al. 1990, 3). I did not consider the people that were interviewed to represent the elite as such, but to possess privileged information and specific knowledge on the topic that they are being interviewed on (Mykkänen 2001, 109). The intention was not to predict their behavior or describe it as such, but to focus on the content of what they are saying as experts on the topic.

The assumption was that people in each of these categories possess different knowledge based on their position. Hence, the donors were expected to have a better view of the overall objectives of the EEP, and how these objectives are expected to come about. What are the intentions and motivations for initiating such a program? The EEP staff was assumed to have the best grasp of general problems and strengths that the program has and practical ideas of how the objectives are carried out. The project leaders were seen as being likely to be the most informative of the local conditions and demand for a program such as EEP. Their responses could also be used to understand how the norms have diffused and inform implementation of the EEP.

When preparing for the interviews I aimed for building a list of questions that revolved around key themes of this research. I prepared specific questions, but only rarely stuck to the exact words and form that I had written up for myself in the interviews. The aim of this was twofold: trying to avoid making leading questions (i.e. questions that would in one way or another imply what kind of an answer was expected) and second, to still be able to steer the interviews to revolve around the intended themes and not start talking about something else (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 1995, 36; 85). As such, the interviews were semi-structured, as the order of the interview questions was not structured. They were focused interviews in the sense that I steered the interviews around pre-selected themes, while the aim was to get the interviewees' 'rambling' at their own speed in order to get rich and detailed answers on the selected themes (Bryman 2008, 437).

Each theme discussed had a distinct set of question. The questions' design was expected to bring out clear answer concerning policy issues, while at the same time allowing for the norms to come

²⁶ The project leaders or project representatives that were interviewed represent the projects presented on pp.14–15.

up in the answers. I did not intend to talk explicitly about norms as such, but to ask for definitions when the norms come up.

The general themes for the interviews were:

- Poverty reduction
- Mitigation
- Capacity building
- Sustainability
- Ownership

I assumed my knowledge of the issue to correspond most strongly with those of the donors, as in having a theoretical understanding of these issues and to have less specific information of what actually goes on in the field. As officials representing the donors those interviews were expected to be mostly giving praise to the program even though they would possess information of shortcomings. I was not sure how the EEP staff and national representatives would behave in the interviews, but I did assume the project leaders to be the most open about issues discussed and short-comings of the program. Also, I assumed everyone interviewed to speak as representing their organizations not as individuals although especially with the projects, the distinction between these identities might not be significant for the themes discussed.

4.3. Operationalization of the interviews

I started out with an idea about first interviewing the donors, then the EEP staff and finally the projects. This was due to the fact that I assumed norm diffusion to be happening in this direction. This order of the interviews did not work out due to time constraints and the problem of finding a suitable time with the donors; hence, the donors were the last to be interviewed. Still, it became clearer to me during the research that all of the assumptions made before starting the study and conducting the interviews did not hold, and the role of the EEP in actively diffusing norms was not as obvious as imagined. In the end, the fact that donors were the last to be interviewed seemed quite satisfactory, as I had gained a good understanding of the program and it proved useful for inquiring about issues that had been brought up earlier.

The interviewees were approached by email which asked if they could participate in the research by giving an interview that would take about an hour. The emails also pointed out that the research was funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, as it was considered that this would significantly increase the chances of getting the people approached to agree to the

interviews. I also made clear that I represent the Finland Futures Research Centre (FFRC) and that this was a commissioned research carried out independently. This also gave the interviewees an idea of what to expect. I believe that for everyone with a western background, this context was quite familiar. However, I am not certain whether all the Cambodians and Laotians could make this distinction or not, namely, that I was not working for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, which funds the EEP, but also the research of FFRC.

The email sent described the objective of the research and the themes to be discussed in a few lines. Everyone approached agreed to be interviewed. All the donors asked to see the questions beforehand while no-one else asked for more information. The donors were sent a list of the themes and issues to be discussed, but not the list of possible questions under each theme.

A mission to the Mekong region took place between the 23rd of February and 12th of March. Ten interviews (one hour each) were conducted that are analyzed in this research. In addition to these, I also interviewed an organization that had unsuccessfully applied for funding from the EEP, a representative of Finpro²⁷ to the region and an aid worker that had been stationed in the region over ten years. The aim of this exercise was to gather views of the EEP from actors who only had a view of the program from the “outside” and to gain a better understanding of the research and the local circumstances. These interviews provided some good insights and ideas for the study, but in terms of the objectives of this research, a decision was made not to include these into the analysis of this research as they provided mostly anecdotal evidence, and it would have been difficult to categorically include them in the theoretical approach. The donors were interviewed in Finland in March and in June 2011. Both the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Nordic Development Fund had two persons responsible for the program attending one interview. The interviews were requested separately, but the donors preferred to have only a single session where both of them could attend, probably in order to avoid discrepancies between their answers.

As the literature on conducting interviews for academic research suggested, I tried to keep the content focused with the presence of a fairly specific list of topics, but still leave room for the order in which the issues were discussed. I also tried to avoid leading questions. (See e.g. Bryman 2008, 242.) This approach worked very well after I became familiar with the issues. I also tried some leading question at some interviews for example asking: “How have you taken gender issues into account in your project?” This did get a response describing how many measures had been

²⁷ According to their own description: “Finpro is a globally operating organization that helps Finnish companies to grow internationally and successfully.” (FINPRO 2011.)

taken and how gender is usually considered in project design. When issues were brought up by the initiative of the respondent, the answers were usually more descriptive. This happened only once with regards to gender when the composition of village committees was discussed.

Generally speaking, issues relating to climate change in the program and projects did come up quite easily in questions about program or project design or the benefits of capacity building and awareness raising. Issues relating to poverty were only infrequently introduced by the interviewees and were mostly answered only when asked directly. Poverty reduction was initially a point of focus, but it was rarely discussed in depth or analytically. Some of the interviewees did not seem to question to any extent that energy will lead to poverty reduction. Still, this question is quite extensively debated in the academic literature, specifically pointing out that energy alone is not sufficient but other factors need to be present too for most outcomes to realize. This was the most important factor for why the main focus of this study became climate change mitigation, with poverty reduction and ownership analyzed as complementary dimensions.

When conducting the interviews I tried to avoid using technical or academic language as interviewees should most often not be expected to speak through theoretical concepts or they might understand the concepts differently (Bryman 2008, 243). Still, I did not have a full comprehension of the extent of what could be considered to be theoretical concepts and language. For example, ownership is common jargon in development language but still it was unclear for some what it meant. Definitions for concepts like ownership or sustainable development were different among all the people interviewed, although they did have some central common characteristics. This meant that for practical reason I very quickly took a more down-to-earth approach for these issues than I had in the first interviews. This improved the quality of the answers.

The preparations for the interviews could have been better. The research was moving quite fast in the beginning, and the lack of available documentation also created some constraints. The focus of the interviews could have been more focused, while now it seemed that I was touching upon a great number of issues rather than focusing on a few better specified questions. In retrospect, I find that the norms studied did come up in a meaningful way in all of the interviews, and it was mostly my own expectations about how the interviews would go that was different, not the responses obtained.

I used my notes quite extensively in the first interviews, but in the last four interviews I did not look at my papers anymore. This allowed me to focus on the questions I really wanted more information on. As I was somewhat inexperienced in conducting focused interviews, the first interviews did not provide me with very deep descriptive responses, but rather quite short responses to the questions presented. Although all the issues were discussed in all of the interviews, in the first ones, I could not really focus on asking consecutive questions that would've gone deeper into the topics. I was more focused on being able to carry the interviews forward and to remember all the themes. Later, I learned the questions by heart, which allowed more flexibility so that even if a question was first dodged or avoided I knew how to rephrase or reformulate a question to get a better answer. The discussions also became more relaxed as I learned the themes better and knew what to expect and how the respondents would generally react. As such, the material for the analysis is not as deep and descriptive from the first interviews. Still, I do not see this as crucially affecting the results or the analysis, as the most important points were discussed in all of the interviews.

Some of the interviews were carried out with the leader of the research project of the FFRC. The main reason for this was the hierarchies that exist in Cambodia and the Lao PDR. It was decided that it was too unlikely that I could get interviews from the Ministries in the countries unless a senior's prestige accompanied the interview requests. Also, his presence was deemed important in these interviews and he was present for some time in most of these interviews. However, it sometimes seemed that the respondents were reserved due to his presence. In most of the interviews where my senior participated, he usually left after ten or fifteen minutes saying he had another meeting, which was always the case. Although I probably would not have been able to get the interviews independently, the interviewees sometimes became more relaxed and open after my senior had left. In two of the interviews, the tone and manner in which things were expressed clearly indicated that I was not in a position to ask about sensitive issues, regardless of whether my senior was present or not. To some extent, I saw these situations to be very similar to how elite interviews are described in academic literature. (See e.g. Smith 2006; Mykkänen 2001.)

All the intended interviews were successfully carried out. At the beginning of each interview I asked the interviewees if the discussions could be recorded and no one had any objections to this. In parallel with this, I informed them that the data collected from the interviews would be handled anonymously. A decision to treat all the material collected with the interviews anonymously was made at an early stage in order to provide the interviewees the possibility to speak openly about

the program. Still, as the program is relatively small, and at the time of carrying out the fieldwork it was at an early stage of implementation, it may, therefore, be possible to identify some of the respondents. However, this issue was clear to the interviewees, and this may have led to some self-censorship with sensitive issues. While some of the interviewees preferred to stay anonymous, others were happy to speak openly with their own name and on behalf of the organization they represented. In order to treat all individuals and implementing organizations equally, the names of the interviewees will not be revealed. In a few cases in which the interviews have provided information that is publicly available and easy to find, I have not tried to hide direct references to organizations as I did not really see the point. A clear example would be the interview with the Nordic Development Fund (NDF) in which they told me that their new mandate is to focus on climate change. As NDF is one of the two donors, I did not see why I should try to hide that this fact came up in the interview.

4.4. Assessing the interviews

The setting was very different in interviews with people with a western background compared with the interviews with Cambodians and Laotians. There are probably a number of reasons contributing to this. I suspect that hierarchies would be one of the most important ones. The discussions were generally most open with the project leaders and representatives, who spoke openly about short-comings and issues that could be better or improved. They also analyzed reasons for these short-comings. I suppose one reason for this is the idea of how processes are analyzed and criticized in order to make them better. Some of the interviewees might also have thought that I was a channel through which they can give their own input towards how the program should be changed or enhanced in the future. Another point was probably that my role as independent from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland was quite clear for the people with a western background. I was also seen as someone who was well informed about the themes discussed.

All of the recorded interviews were transcribed. Some editing was done when quotes were used in the analysis. Most importantly I removed colloquial elements and some repetitions that occurred. This was done in order to improve the readability of the direct quotations. As I am analyzing how norms are diffused by how they are understood and explained, I felt that this type of editing had no effect on how the responses are understood. For example, from a transcribed text, in a response to the compatibility of poverty reduction and mitigation, which was (removed words in italics): “*Well*, they could go but I'm not sure if they always go. *The type of a, of a finding win-win*

type of approaches and projects may not always be very easy” appears in the analysis as: “They could go [together] but I'm not sure if they always go. Finding win-win type of approaches and projects may not always be very easy”. I have also corrected grammatical mistakes in the quotations where needed.

Naturally, the interviews will not be presented in full, but I have used the most relevant and most descriptive responses and parts that I hope will credibly present the case, as well as make it possible to understand how conclusions are drawn. I set out to analyze norm diffusion, and to give a full account, I will also present cases and answers which were not completely in line with what was expected or sometimes differ from most of the other responses. As it turns out, norm diffusion from the international treaties is not completely unproblematic, and with some of the norms analyzed their contents and definitions vary considerably. I have aimed to present discussions in a way which gives an idea of how commonly supported some norms are, and how these norms are understood.

While the representatives of local Ministries in Cambodia and Laos²⁸ were clearly representing their organizations it is harder for me to know whether the other project leaders or representatives were speaking for themselves or as only representing their organization. I would think that in most cases they were speaking as themselves and as representatives of their organization because these different identities would for a large be part overlapping. The donors and the EEP chief technical advisor were mostly representing their organizations and speaking on behalf of it, but they did let in some personal opinions. This was quite clearly indicated as in these cases they started speaking with “I think,” “for me personally” or “in my opinion” and these were usually following a direct response to the question I had presented. I have included a few of these responses into my analysis, and this will be clearly indicated. Apart from these, in the analysis, I will take the donors and the chief technical advisor to be speaking for their organizations and the project leaders and representatives to be speaking more as individuals. I do not see this as affecting the quality of the research due to the way that norm diffusion is analyzed, namely, that the projects are taken mostly to reflect how the norms take shape in implementation and how the people implementing understand and see these norms. As such, they will reflect the norms only in relation to the program as most of the norms analyzed do not prescribe behavior for individuals, but rather for states.

²⁸ This includes all local interviews as two of them were with the national representatives for the EEP and two involved in projects.

4.5. Analyzing the data

The analysis starts by introducing the norms and the international agreements in which these norms have most recently been institutionalized by all the countries in this research. This will also specify the content of the norms, what behavior the norms refer to. I will then turn to Finnish Development Policies and the EEP Program document to look at how these norms are presented there and also point out how some of these norms have been framed²⁹. The meaning is to show that these norms are institutionalized and what frames have been given to the norms by Finland. This will be done focusing on the norms in question and issues related to the EEP. As pointed out in chapter three, institutionalization tells us very little about actual behavior, and it is not a sufficient indicator of norm diffusion. A deeper analysis looking at actors will tell whether the norms have been internalized. (See e.g. Allden 2009, 50.) Institutionalization will provide a starting point for analyzing how the actors understand and conform to the norms. The assumption here is that the Finnish Development Policy Programme actually influences Finnish development cooperation programs and also that the EEP program document guides and informs what the EEP decides to fund in order to achieve its objectives.

I then will turn to interviews with the donors and the chief technical advisor of the EEP. I will collectively refer to this as group A and refer to the interviews using numbers 1A to 5A. I take these interviews and the responses and explanations in these interviews to represent the first stage in which norm internalization can happen. The interviews with group A reflect how the people in charge of the program and those managing it understand the norms and their prescriptions. At the end of this exercise, I will draw together how the people of group A understand the norms and what the program is doing and also point out where their views and conceptions differ. These will be compared with how the norms were institutionalized in the documents analyzed.

In the next section I will turn to how the project is being implemented. This will be analyzed based on the interviews with the projects and national representatives of each country for the EEP. The way that the projects' operations are described will be used to analyze if the described behavior actually corresponds with the behavior prescribed by the norms in the documentation or by the people who have selected these projects to receive funding. I take this to point towards the level of internalization of the norms in the EEP. This does not necessarily refer to whether these individuals have internalized the norms or not, although to me it seems that there is not a very big

²⁹ For framing norms see chapter three.

difference. To clarify, climate change mitigation does not prescribe behavior for individuals the way it is institutionalized in the UNFCCC or the Kyoto Protocol. Still, for example, a number of people in the industrialized countries are willing to pay more for clean electricity or climate friendly food, which would indicate that they are personally willing to contribute to climate change mitigation even though there is no internationally institutionalized norm that would tell them as individuals that it is appropriate behavior.

Finally, I will look at how norm diffusion looks like through the EEP. What does behavior look like through the projects implemented? Is the norm content constant throughout the program or does it change, and if so, how does it change? How has the norm of climate change mitigation diffused in the EEP?

5. Analysis

“Every activity that we [finance] in these countries is of course development also, but for us, the key, is really to determine whether it’s [relevant for] climate change.”
(Representative of the NDF.)

I will now turn to analyzing how the norms diffuse in the context of the EEP and how the norms are shaped and gain new meanings and content in the process. When I started for the research I was relatively skeptical of the program. I believe this did not affect my judgment significantly as in the end I feel that the projects are actually quite good and relevant. I do still feel dubious about the overall structure of the program which is driven by an agenda I personally have trouble agreeing with.

This chapter will begin with pointing to “norm origins”³⁰ for the norms under analysis. This task will also explicitly define what kind of behavior the norms prescribe. I will then show how these norms appear in the Finnish Development Policy documents as they are the general guidelines for

³⁰ As noted earlier in chapter three, I take a point of norm institutionalization in an international agreement as the starting point for analyzing norm diffusion in this study. This serves the purpose of analyzing how the norms diffuse to a certain setting. The norm origins could naturally be traced further back. However, I will show that these “origins” are also points of direct reference in the program and therefore they define the norms with the content under analysis here.

all Finnish development cooperation including the EEP. The content and shape of the norms will also be analyzed in the EEP Program documents.

All sections in this chapter will loosely follow the same structure. They will begin by describing how the norms are understood, what kind of behavior they define as appropriate and for which actor identities, if it is specified. I will then turn to the content of the norms in relation to how they appeared on a previous levels analyzed in the diffusion. This will be done keeping in mind the setting for this study as presented in Figure 3. Although there can be significant feedback from each level, they are outside the scope of this research. As such, this will follow the idea that in the international fora the norms have a more general content, and, when coming closer to implementation and actual behavior, they gain a degree of specificity which defines how they are implemented in the field.

If there is a change in the norm content, I will specify how the norm has been framed in the context with other norms under investigation in this study. This is done in order to understand how the norms interact with each other. When possible, I will also elaborate on the implications these changes might have.

5.1. Norm origins

All the norms are presented as originating in a recent international treaty or a declaration. This does not mean that the norms just come about at these events, but rather as the theory describes, they have been around for a longer time. For the purpose of this study these points have been selected as reflecting the international institutionalization of these norms, and to specify what is the behavior prescribed. All the countries in this research – Cambodia, Finland and Lao PDR - are signatories to these treaties and declarations. The treaties in question here are the United Nations Framework Conference on Climate Change and, specifically, the Kyoto Protocol for mitigation³¹, Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals for poverty reduction³² and the Paris Declaration for ownership.

5.1.1. Climate change mitigation

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was conceived in 1992, and currently carries 195 signatories. While carrying limited operational value, the UNFCCC established the means by which the international community was to address the increasingly pressing threats posed by climate change. Several important principles were agreed to in the UNFCCC. In Article 2,

³¹ On previous research on climate change norms see e.g. Pettinger (2007).

³² On previous research on the norms of poverty reduction see e.g. Fukuda-Parr & Hulme (2011).

countries agreed upon the “stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (UNFCCC 1992, 4). The years following the ratification of the UNFCCC have witnessed an extensive debate over what dangerous anthropogenic interference specifically is and how this should be prevented. With regards to how, the UNFCCC acknowledges the “common but differentiated responsibilities” of developed and developing countries. Historically, developed countries are responsible for 75 percent of cumulative greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, it is argued that a majority of climate change mitigation should occur in the industrialized countries in the North, and these should pave the way towards a low-carbon economy.

This study does not aim to explain how and why the norm of climate change mitigation developed and became institutionalized, but aims to explore how it informs and affects the behaviour in the context of development cooperation and especially the EEP Mekong. The main point of departure for this is the Kyoto Protocol (UN 1997), which was signed under the UNFCCC process in 1997. The convention was signed in 1992 and Article 2 stated the ultimate objective as:

“To achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.” (UNFCCC 1992.)

This laid the basis for climate change mitigation and in the Kyoto Protocol most industrialized countries committed to quantifiable emission reductions. Article 3 of the Kyoto Protocol states:

“The Parties included in Annex I [industrialized countries] shall, individually or jointly, ensure that their aggregate anthropogenic carbon dioxide equivalent emissions of the greenhouse gases listed in Annex A do not exceed their assigned amounts, calculated pursuant to their quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments inscribed in Annex B and in accordance with the provisions of this Article, with a view to reducing their overall emissions of such gases by at least 5 per cent below 1990 levels in the commitment period 2008 to 2012.” (UN 1997.)

Important to note is that the ultimate objectives do not define any particular ways to achieve these reduction but focus on the overall objective. The main ways to achieve this objective are the reduction of emissions and enhancing greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs. Even as such, there remain a number of ways to achieve this. To be precise, countries do not emit greenhouse gases

but actors within countries do. The ways for achieving these emission reductions are open, although a number of mechanisms have been created for enabling these processes.

As stated earlier, I take the norm of climate change mitigation in this research as prescribing that **industrialized countries should mitigate climate change in order to reduce its severity**. If the level of a norm's institutionalisation is judged by how specific it is (Krook & True 2010; Legro 1997), the norm of climate change mitigation seems to be very institutionalized in the Kyoto Protocol, as it goes far in also specifying quantifiable and measurable targets for mitigation for individual countries. However, in the strict definition of the norm, this is not included. Also, the norm does not specify means to achieve the objective of the norm. Elaborating on the role of industrialized and developing countries Article 10 of the Kyoto Protocol laid out the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities according to which:

“All Parties, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, without introducing any new commitments for Parties not included in Annex I.” (UN 1997.)

This enforced the idea that developing countries priority is development, but that, according to their own capabilities, they should contribute to combating climate change. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities became quickly debated, especially concerning the BASIC countries Brazil, South-Africa, India and China, as they have witnessed fast economic growth in the past decade. However, it remains to be seen that reduction commitments would be required from the LDCs on any level.

A number of mechanisms have been developed that provide possibilities for the developing countries to participate in the process. One rationale has been that the emission reductions should be done where they are the cheapest, as the geographical location of emission reductions is irrelevant for the climate. Many NGOs have, however, argued that the majority of emission reductions should take place in the industrialized country in question and off-set should only complement this tendency. Currently, the most significant mechanism created for including the developing countries has been the clean development mechanism. The norm of climate change mitigation is well established throughout documents which quote it often and directly. This is also what previous research on climate change mitigation has shown.

5.1.2. Poverty reduction

Like the climate change mitigation norm the poverty reduction norm is also an ultimate objective and does not specify any means for achieving the objective. Poverty reduction is the traditional objective for all development cooperation. EEP is a development cooperation program, but where climate change plays also a significant role. This is why these norms are studied in this research together. While mitigation is seen as the responsibility of industrialized countries poverty reduction does not refer to any actors at all.

The Millennium Development Goals were endorsed by 189 countries in 2000.³³ This placed development at the center of global agenda with poverty reduction as the overarching objective, and it was institutionalized in the MDGs. Fukuda-Parr and Hulme (2011) took the definition for the norm from the Millennium Declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2000, which reads:

“We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want. We resolve therefore to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty.” (UN 2000.)

They defined the antipoverty norm as pointing out that **“extreme, dehumanizing poverty is morally unacceptable and should be eradicated”** (2011, 18). This is how the norm is also treated in this study. A central idea that poverty is multidimensional is reflected in the MDGs. The MDGs have quickly become institutionalized in a number of policy statements and other documentation and they have also become the ultimate goals of virtually all international development efforts. The MDGs are often used as a synonym for poverty reduction (Fukuda-Parr & Hulme 2001, 28).

Energy is not referred to directly in any of the MDGs, but it is seen by many as contributing significantly to achieving a number of the goals set by the MDGs. The links between energy services and poverty reduction were highlighted in the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, where the EEP was also initiated. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation called for the international community to:

“Take joint actions and improve the efforts to work together at all levels to improve access to reliable and affordable energy services for sustainable development sufficient to facilitate

³³ Curiously as with climate change, the USA adopted the MDGs originally but, refuted them under the Bush administration (Fukuda-Parr & Hulme 2011, 25).

the achievement of the MDGs, [...] and as a means to generate other important services that mitigate poverty, bearing in mind that access to energy facilitates the eradication of poverty.” (UN 2005).

This link between energy and poverty reduction is also the key idea of the EEP, and providing energy services are the means used to achieve this end. As such this link will be explored in the analysis to some extent, looking at how the actors see these energy activities contributing to poverty reduction.

5.1.3. Ownership

While climate change mitigation and poverty reduction are both quite obvious points of focus as well established and internationally institutionalized norms, this might not be so apparent for ownership. While climate change mitigation and poverty reduction both mainly prescribe ends, ownership can be seen to govern processes and relations between donors and recipients of aid. By informing processes ownership interacts with the norms of poverty reduction and climate change mitigation. It is directly linked to poverty reduction as ownership aims to enhance the effectiveness of aid. Ownership is a key norm in highlighting what goes on between donors and recipients, and who sets the agenda and objectives for activities in developing countries.

In the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 ownership was adopted as the first principle for partnership commitments stating “**partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, strategies and co-ordinate development actions**” (OECD 2005). This is what I refer to when speaking of ownership in this paper. In addition to this, the declaration specifies that the partner countries commit to exercising leadership in developing and implementing their own development strategies and to taking lead in coordinating aid at all levels. The donors committed to respecting partner countries’ leadership (ibid.). I take these additional prescriptions to be central to the Paris Declaration and they are embodied in the idea of how many actors understand ownership. However, for me, they constitute another norm and are not an integral part of the norm of ownership.

The Paris Declaration aimed to address a number of issues that were seen as contributing significantly to the outcomes of development cooperation. Many of its points are based on research findings that explored when aid outcomes are achieved and why. (Koskenranta 2008, 16; Killick 1997.) The key idea is that increased partner country ownership often yields better development results. This is due to the factor that the recipients have a stake in the development intervention and are committed to the outcomes. As such not only does the planning respond to

what the partners actually need but the results are also likelier to have a lasting impact, instead of fading away when the donors leave.

Ownership is very often used in various different contexts, not only with reference to country or partner ownership. It is a principle governing donor – recipient relations on nearly all stages of a development cooperation intervention starting from the definition of national priorities in a developing country to the design and implementation in the field. In an extensive report commissioned by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, SIDA, titled *Aid, Incentives, and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation* (2002) that explored the donor incentives for local actors in development cooperation, ownership was divided into four dimensions. 1) Enunciating demand for development assistance projects or programs, 2) making a tangible contribution in the intervention, 3) obtaining benefits, and 4) shared responsibility for long-term continuation or non-continuation of a project (Ostrom et al 2002, xiv).

Furthermore, ownership does not only refer to relations between countries, but also to relations between actors within countries. The concept of ownership has often been criticized as it is unclear to what it actually refers. Country ownership has also been criticized as it prioritizes governments over other actors, and NGOs and the European Parliament are currently pushing for the adoption of democratic ownership, mainly for the two reasons just mentioned: firstly, so that the concept would regain clarity on what is actually meant with ownership and, secondly, because democratic ownership would prevent the misuse of the concept by certain governments that have used country ownership to exclude civil society organizations from decision-making.³⁴ However, in this study I refer to country ownership as defined above when speaking of ownership. I will now turn to the Finnish Development Policy documents and the EEP Program document to see how these internationally institutionalized norms appear in these documents.

5.2. Finnish Development Policy

This study uses documentation in parallel with the interviews. The documents are used mainly for complementing the data collected with the interviews. The Finnish Development Policy Programme 2007 and Finnish Development Policy Guidelines for Environment 2009 have been used to show norm diffusion and how the norms are framed in these documents. This is due to the assumption that the EEP as a Finnish development cooperation program is based on these documents and its activities correspond with the priorities and principles stated in these

³⁴ For democratic ownership see e.g. Pereira (2011), Reality of Aid (2011), EP DEVE (2011).

documents. These two types of materials answer slightly different questions in the research. Documentation is used for analyzing institutionalization of the norms, while the interviews try to capture what happens after that, whether the norms are also internalized or not (Allden 2009, 52).

The main document governing Finnish development cooperation at the time of conducting this research was *Finnish Development Policy Programme 2007: Towards a Sustainable and Just World Community*. This document serves as laying out the principles, objectives and the structure of all Finnish development cooperation. In addition to these there exist a number of more specific development policy guidelines for different sectors. The main focus will be on the general Development Policy Programme and Policy Guidelines for Environment (FORMIN 2009) will also be looked into, as issues concerning climate change are mostly present in that document. The analysis of these documents will reflect the level of institutionalization of the norms. They are strongly embedded in the policy documents and institutionalized, as defined in chapter three. However, this does not tell us anything about rule-consistent behavior, as a policy document does not imply any actual behavior. Actual behavior indicates norm internalization, which is the final stage in the spiral model. This will be discussed when analyzing the interviews.

The Finnish Development Policy places eradication of poverty and ecologically sustainable development as the two key objectives of all development cooperation. The MDGs are a cornerstone of Finnish development policy with a number of references to the goals and the declaration. Explicitly stated: “The most important goal of development policy is to eradicate poverty in line with the Millennium Development Goals which were set in 2000” (FORMIN, 2007, 12).

A significant role is also given to sustainable development. The importance of economically, socially and ecologically sustainable development is given particular emphasis in issues relating to climate change and the environment (ibid., 27). To ensure effectiveness – one of the guiding principles of development policy – the policy document points out to Finland being one of the signatories to the Paris Declaration in 2005 (ibid., 17). The policy states that simply spending more money will not be sufficient to reach the MDGs. Therefore, one of the principles of Finnish development cooperation is effectiveness, and Finland is said to build on partner countries’ own development and poverty reduction strategies underlining the importance of ownership (ibid.,

23). Conventional 'development aid' has been replaced with real partnerships that emphasize developing countries' ownership of their own development (ibid., 5).

As such, poverty eradication and ownership are integral parts of Finnish development policy with references made to the international agreements in which the norms have been institutionalized. The content of the norms is also the same, and the policy does not give any specifications for them. Development cooperation should aim at poverty eradication respecting that developing countries choose their own path of development. References to ownership also bring out the same key points and ideas which are present in the Paris Declaration.

The development policy also brings up Finland's commitment to combating climate change acknowledging that the poorest countries will suffer the most from the consequences of climate change (ibid., 13). Also, concerning climate change the policy makes a direct reference to the Kyoto Protocol signed in 1997 that assigned industrialized countries mandatory emission reductions. On the role of developing countries a direct reference is made to the agreement, stating "[t]he Protocol allocated obligations relating to combating climate change on the basis of 'common but differentiated responsibilities', acknowledging the developing countries' right to economic growth." (ibid., 10.) To this point the Finnish Development Policy Programme is in line with the internationally institutionalized norms presented above. A small re-framing takes place when the policy discusses the role of energy in Finnish development cooperation. Although largely reflecting the Johannesburg plan of Implementation the policy document goes a step further in linking energy, and particularly renewable energy to climate change.

"Energy is a key factor in combating climate change. Finland supports programmes and projects that focus on saving energy, increasing energy efficiency and producing renewable energy. These types of projects should specifically target poor countries and regions. The production of renewable energy, especially bio, solar and wind energy, provides work and income for the local population." (ibid., 19.)

All the activities mentioned here fall under the scope of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, in other words, climate change mitigation. The Kyoto Protocol and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities explicitly leave climate change mitigation as the responsibility of industrialized countries while developing countries have a right to their own development. However, the norm of mitigation does not prescribe where industrialized countries should exercise mitigation, although a number of NGOs and developing countries have pointed out that emission reduction need to take place mainly within the industrialized countries.

It is also unclear why specifically these types of projects should target poor countries and regions and how specifically these clean energies mentioned here will provide work and income for the local populations. Generally, the production of renewable energy in any of the forms mentioned in this quote require a certain level of technical training which is usually in short supply in poor countries and regions. Disregarding this fact, this quote frames mitigation in the form of renewable energy and energy efficiency as compatible with the norm of poverty reduction as apparently these types of energy production provide work and income, which are required for poverty reduction. As such, renewable energy and energy efficiency will not only mitigate climate change but also contribute to poverty reduction.

The Development Policy Programme makes no reference to climate change mitigation or adaptation under which most climate change related activities can be categorized, like the ones mention above. However, both are discussed in the Finnish Development Policy Guidelines for Environment, where it is said that “climate change mitigation and adaptation are addresses in all of the most important sectors of Finnish development cooperation” (FORMIN 2009, 4). This is what is meant by climate proofing³⁵.

The link between poverty reduction and climate change is further strengthened in the guidelines for environment, stating: “the eradication of poverty and climate change mitigation and adaptation are complementary issues in developing countries and cannot be viewed as separate issues.” (ibid., 10). The policy document on environment also reinforces the norm of ownership by saying that:

“Finland is committed to ensure that the funding through the new agreement on climate change supports developing countries’ own development plans and complies with the principles adopted under the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005).” (ibid., 10.)

It is outside the scope of this study to explore what happened in the two years between the general development policy and the policy guidelines for environment, but the difference seems significant in the relation between climate change mitigation and poverty eradication. In 2009 climate change is constantly linked to poverty reduction and they are seen as inseparable. This can be due to the fact that climate change issues are really not dealt with in the general policy program. Adherence to the norm of ownership on this level of policy documents remains the same but climate change has been linked strongly to all development cooperation activities concerning

³⁵ For climate proofing see chapter two.

poverty eradication. As pointed out in chapter two, the link between, for example, supporting education as a means of poverty reduction and mitigating climate change is usually not understood to be as direct as it is portrayed in the Finnish Development Policy.

5.3. Energy and Environment Partnership with the Mekong Region

The assumption is that the EEP Program, as a program of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, would be broadly in line with the Finnish Development Policy, but with more specification and details on the actualization and implementation of the activities.

As presented before the overall objective of the Energy and Environment Partnership with the Mekong Region is “to contribute to improved access to energy and energy services and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.” This incorporates the two norms in the framing given in the development policy guidelines. Curiously, while the mitigation norm is explicit in the objective poverty reduction is only implicitly present assuming that energy does contribute towards poverty reduction. What is more is that although the name of the program mentions environment, climate *is* the environmental dimension of the program.

Partnership can be seen as a reference to two different ideas. The first is the idea of partnerships in the spirit of the Paris Declaration, wherein developing countries are put in the driver’s seat of their own development. The second connotation is to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg 2002. Partnerships for sustainable development were a significant complementary outcome of the WSSD. These type II partnerships are multi-stakeholder initiatives aimed at implementing sustainable development. These initiatives can include various stakeholders and a central idea is to bring in private and other non-state actors into development processes. This idea is also central in the EEP Mekong as it provides funding only to partnership initiatives.³⁶

Focusing on energy and climate the EEP embodies the idea that climate change mitigation and poverty reduction are presented as being complementary issues. In a Foreign Ministry document that describes how and where Finnish ODA has been used the primary objective of the EEP Mekong is poverty reduction with environmental aid mentioned as a significant secondary objectives of the program. The development objective is to promote the wider and more efficient

³⁶ Using public money for private interest has been an idea criticized by various development NGOs (see e.g. Eurodad 2011; Bretton Woods Project 2010; Ellmers 2010). However, the issue seems to be very different when it comes to climate change where the role of private actors is seen by many as central in meeting the set targets for reducing the growth of emissions. Although an interesting topic it is outside the focus of this research.

use of renewable energies and energy efficiency and to mitigate the effects of climate change (FORMIN 2010, 31).

The norm of poverty eradication is presented in the EEP Program Document only in relation to energy apart from describing the national priorities of the target countries. Referring to the policy program of 2007 the EEP Programme Document states:

“Finland's development policy programme 2007 identifies Mekong region as one of the areas for regional cooperation where sustainable development is becoming a key thematic issue. The policy recommends cooperation in the energy sector as a means to promote sustainable development and combat climate change. According to the principles of the policy, saving energy, increasing energy efficiency and producing renewable energy, should target poor countries and regions. Production of renewable energy has many socio-economic linkages such as employment and income creation and sustainable agriculture and forestry and it can work effectively for poverty reduction.” (EEP 2010, 1.)

Even though the role of energy is not very central in the policy program of 2007, it is highlighted in the EEP by saying:

“The [Finnish Development] Policy lays emphasis on energy as a key factor in the economic development and in the mitigation of climate change. It recognizes that renewable energy is directly linked to various social, economic and environmental questions both on national and international level.” (ibid., 22.)

Unfortunately, the document does not go further into describing *how* energy is linked to and essential for poverty reduction but only states that energy can support reaching the MDGs as outlined for example by the UN-Energy³⁷ (ibid.).

This is as far as the program document deals with poverty reduction. As such it is framed to be an integral part of energy services and especially renewable energy. The focus shifts to energy services and the important role of promoting energy efficiency and renewable energies in the target countries. The MDGs can be found in the EEP program document like they are in MDGs. In the program, providing and enhancing energy services are seen as instruments for achieving the objective of poverty reduction.

Admittedly framing climate change mitigation to be an inseparable outcome of renewable energy is quite a practical framing based on material findings. Mitigation is still always relative. One needs a baseline from which mitigation can be calculated. When providing access to energy it could be

³⁷ For a discussion on the role of energy and poverty reduction see chapter two.

assumed that before it was provided, there was no energy. Using solar panels, for example, will produce fewer emissions than burning coal, but, choosing coal as a point of comparison is contingent and the emissions could be also compared with large scale hydro or nuclear for that matter. It is hard to show how new energy mitigates emissions. This boils down to how mitigation is calculated, and in some cases it is calculated on projected future emissions.

Climate change mitigation is not an automatic result of renewable energy projects. Furthermore, providing renewable energy neither leads automatically to poverty reduction either, because energy does not necessarily turn into energy services. The concept of energy service describes the benefits that energy offers. Basic energy services of households include lighting, cooking, refrigeration, communication, education, entertainment and transport. However essential for development energy is only a means to an end. (See e.g. Vera et al. 2005.) Without teachers or school books energy can rarely bring benefits for education. However, it should be noted, that although renewable energy projects would not directly achieve the target of poverty alleviation, they can in many ways increase the standard of living.

If the amount of words and space used to describe a phenomena or an issue is any indication of its importance, then poverty reduction would not stand a chance against the climate change component in the EEP. Similarly, if the order in which issues are presented is any indication of their importance, the case would be the same.

In relation to the national priorities of Cambodia and the Lao PDR, the description of energy and climate change policies and situations in each country start by mentioning their roles as signatories to the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol. It is mentioned later that poverty reduction and achieving the MDGs are the highest priorities in both countries' national development plans (ibid., 6–9).

The relationship between national ownership and mitigation receives some interesting features in the program document. So far, climate change mitigation has been framed as being compatible with poverty reduction in renewable energy and energy efficiency project. Renewable energy and energy efficiency are said to incorporate both poverty reduction and climate change mitigation. No direct reference is made in the document to the concept of ownership, apart from mentioning that, based on the experiences of EEP in Central America, national ownership has been strengthened in this program (ibid., 1). Still, references made to national strategies and priorities can be seen as signs of ownership understood as partner countries' effective leadership over their

policies and strategies, if these strategies and priorities are respected as appropriate behavior would suggest in this case. As a challenge to the sustainability to the program and its project, the program document acknowledges:

“Governments’ priority is to provide infrastructure for transmission and distribution of grid electricity powered, for example, by large hydropower. [...] While there are plans, such as Master Plan for rural electrification with renewable energy in Cambodia and Laos, there are many uncertainties regarding the electrification plans and pace of grid development. This makes people hesitant to invest in RET [renewable energy technology]. Furthermore, there is uncertainty on the government side on the implementation of the rural electrification and renewable energy plans. [...] Because of Laos’ large hydropower potential and rapid increase of electricity demand (15% per year according to EDL [Electricité du Laos]), government’s commitment to distributed systems is challenged. Small hydro power and RE [renewable energy] in general is used as an “interim” measure and there is no incentive for people to continue using it as and when grid electricity becomes available. [...] Governments’ policies on RE are yet to be finalised and political decisions made. Sustainable financing mechanisms for RET have not been developed and RET has not spread on commercial basis.” (EEP 2010, 25.)

Naturally, this does not exclude renewable energy from the agenda, but does give a strong impression that the project is not aiming at a national priority in either of the countries. This would imply that the EEP is breaking from the norm of ownership. Furthermore, as discussed in chapter two industrialized countries and international financial institutions have had a tendency to push their own priorities into national policy documents of developing countries. Developing countries have adopted or accepted these priorities in order to ensure future support from the donors. This has raised questions of whether national priorities are truly appreciated in every context. The policy document goes on to say:

“With Cambodia and Laos EEP needs to build a close working relationship to support development of funding proposals and coordination with partners who support and implement RE projects. Furthermore, it is crucial to ensure that the accumulated experience of the EEP feeds into the policy development of the countries. In Laos where RE [renewable energy] strategy development is supported by Finland, there is an opportunity for close collaboration. In Cambodia, where partners are more diverse and scattered, the coordination potential of EEP should be fully utilized.”(EEP 2010, 26.)

Here, the EEP program document seems to contradict itself to some extent. First, it refers to strengthened ownership, and then introduces the national development priorities of the partner countries and finally states that renewable energy is not actually a priority, but that attempts should be made to push it forward. Not only does Finland break the norm of ownership, but also

can be thought of as redefining the norm of climate change mitigation. The behavior prescribed remains the same: to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to reduce the severity of climate change. However, now this task seems to also be extended to developing countries, contrary to the Kyoto Protocol and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. In fact, the problem analysis that defines the purpose and objective of the interventions points out two core problems that have been identified:

- “1) Barriers to access to energy in general and renewable energy in particular and
- 2) Increasing amount of greenhouse gas emissions. The lack of energy limits livelihoods and other economic activities and maintains poverty. Increasing greenhouse gases lead to climate change with its economic and social impacts.” (ibid., 12.)

Increasing greenhouse gases leads to climate change with various impacts, but as stated in the Kyoto Protocol no new commitments should be introduced for developing countries. Evidence also shows (Michaelowa & Michaelowa 2007, 12–16) that mitigating climate change in least developed countries can be expected to be cost-inefficient, as they really do not have emission they could cut.

As such, the framing of renewable energy and energy efficiency to incorporate the ideas of poverty reduction and climate change mitigation has been framed to be an integral part of the approach of the program. However, mitigating climate change has also been extended to LDCs, not only through the reference to renewable energy, but also implicitly by referring to the negative effects that climate change can have in relation to how important energy is. The LDCs do not have any ownership over the agenda of climate change mitigation. The priority of the Cambodian and Laotian governments is extending the grid, with renewable energy possibly serving as an interim measure. The behavior prescribed by climate change mitigation norm has been diffused to those whom it has been extended to include LDCs, which had previously been explicitly excluded.

What makes this particularly interesting is that apparent material gains for this behavior are very small, if not negligible. The greenhouse gas emissions of Cambodia and the Lao PDR are negligible, as pointed out in chapter two. This is also recognized in the EEP program document (EEP 2010, 4–6). Even the combined mitigation potential from all EEP activities is very small right now and it seems extremely difficult for Finland to claim offsets from these activities in the future. The favoring of Nordic partners in project selection could bring projects and, hence, income for Finnish companies, but the analysis of the projects at this stage reveals that this is not the case. The EEP

could also function as a mechanism supporting technology transfer from Finland to the region, but this does not seem to be happening in practice either.

The program seems to conform to the norm of climate change mitigation quite strongly, according to the program document. A significant difference from the Finnish Development Policy Programme is that the EEP is a development cooperation program which should support Cambodia's and the Lao PDR's own national priorities and development plans. Climate change mitigation is not on their agenda, and it is not a priority for them. Climate change mitigation has been framed to be an integral part of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects that the EEP supports. Renewable energy and energy efficiency are claimed to contribute to poverty reduction through providing improved access to energy. This partly helps to explain the presence of the mitigation component but the program document goes further than this implying that climate change should be mitigated in these countries.

The focus of the activities that the EEP is described to support seems to be leaning towards the mitigation component rather than eradicating poverty. While reference is made to country ownership in respecting national development priorities the action described seem to be braking against this norm through emphasizing the importance of climate change mitigation also in these countries. Framing renewable energy technologies as contributing towards climate change mitigation and poverty reduction can be seen as a way for making mitigation compatible with the existing normative environment when it is also contributing to the appropriate goal of poverty reduction. This has been claimed to improve the chances of an international norm fitting into a domestic setting (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 897). Getting national elites to accept the norm is often seen as a factor significantly influencing how well a norm can diffuse and become accepted by the masses (Flockhart 2005 cit. in Allden 2009, 19). As such, pushing for a stronger integration of the renewable energy and energy efficiency agenda to national policy making can be seen as a way of trying to influence national elite. Still, this can face great opposition as extending the national grid is seen as a primary means of providing access to energy as well as a sign of development. A decentralized system of renewable energy technologies is an idea with foreign origins, which is sometimes also a reason for resisting new norms in a local setting. (Acharaya 2004, 245.)

I will now turn to explore how the individuals in the EEP program see these issues, how they understand these norms and what kind of content they give to them. I will start with the donor

representatives that are in charge of implementing the program and the high staff of the EEP. I take them as representing the objectives of Finland and the program and, as such, expect them to reflect the same conceptions of the norms as they have been presented here. After the donors, I will turn to national representatives and the projects.

5.4. Donor interviews – assessing what the EEP is really about

As stated earlier, based on the interviews, I collectively call people and answers presented here as group A, and take the answers here to be representing the views of the organizations, not the individuals that were interviewed. Group A refers to donors, i.e. Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Nordic Development Fund (NDF), and EEP staff that run and implement the program. So far, I have only explored how the documents have described priorities and their foci. While actual implementation was not studied in this study, many practical issues were discussed in the interviews. These discussions on how the program will be implemented and what goes on in the field provided some insight for this study. Actors do not frame norms only in their rhetoric but also in how they act (Khagram 2002). Still, internalization of norms will only be discussed in the next section which focuses on the projects.

5.4.1. “Our project is very much climate change oriented.” The role of mitigation in the EEP

The focus of the program that the documentation pointed towards was confirmed by the interviews with group A. As one of the interviewees put it:

“Our project is very much climate change oriented [...] The two objectives of our program is to give better access to energy to people and mainly rural poor and minorities[...] and the second is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Every project that we say we implement reduces greenhouse gas emissions.” (Interview 1A.)

Poverty reduction will come about if the assumption holds that access to energy can help in achieving that objective. Mitigating climate change on the other hand is stated explicitly. The framing in the development policy guidelines for environment which put climate change mitigation and poverty eradication together claiming that they could not be viewed as separate issues was echoed in the exact same spirit by two other interviewees.

“They [mitigation and poverty eradication] are interlinked anyhow I think, so you cannot sort of categorize them that it is this or it’s either that [...] maybe in ten years’ time we could evaluate what EEP really has achieved, but at this stage it’s too early.” (Interview 3A.)

In the second answer on this theme a more practical dimension was also mentioned:

“When you think in general renewable energy projects are energy conservation and energy efficiency. It’s always quite easy to put all the projects under the mitigation and it’s more difficult to put them under poverty reduction³⁸. So if we start to separate the projects that we have selected I think it’s a little bit artificial to say which ones goes [under which]. For me it’s difficult to say because you would have to see the results and it will take a long time before you actually see the results. [...] Anyway when you look at the project proposals you have to always promise to do this and that, but it will take years to actually see if it’s actually going to realize. So we always plan to do both.” (Interview 2A.)

In a way, it is not surprising that the donor representative might, and does, repeat official policy. I still find it surprising how well the answers in the interviews correspond with the policy document and how the issue is framed. A new perspective is also brought into the picture. Framing mitigation and poverty eradication together is a practical solution and what is really achieved will only be discovered with time. Assessing this approach from an ownership perspective it would seem natural that the aim was poverty eradication, and if at the same time climate change can be mitigated, there is nothing wrong with that. However, the answers seem to reflect that these objectives would be equal in a sense or even, that mitigation is definitely what is being done, but for results on poverty reduction one cannot know yet.

The response to the questions concerning the focus of the program was as clear as it gets from the Nordic Development Fund. The following is a response to the above-mentioned question above about the relationship of the twin objectives of the program:

A: This is our favorite topic, because we got a new mandate. [...] We realize that every activity that we do in these countries is of course development, but for us, the key is really to determine whether it’s climate change. [...]

Q: And that’s the focus, the climate focus?

A: That’s climate and climate only. Our mandate says climate and development but it has to be climate. We look at the climate first.”³⁹

³⁸ For example, Klein et al. (2005) have argued that for political decision-makers, channeling funding to quantifiable objectives can be easier, as clear results are easier to demonstrate and usually faster than with, for example adaptation or poverty reduction where the benefits are either qualitative or the results become visible after a longer time.

³⁹ Later on, I did contemplate how knowing this beforehand might have changed my approach to the interviews or the whole study. I came to the conclusion that this probably would not have had very much influence. Perhaps this self-assessment is too optimistic. Still, the climate component in the program was quite clear from the beginning of the study. Also, I am inclined to believe that finding this out only in the last interview allowed me to keep an open mind in all the other interviews and also allowed me to focus more on the poverty reduction dimension/component of the program in the other interviews.

This response explains well the importance of the climate component as well as how carefully it is considered in the program. The mandate of the Nordic Development Fund sets climate change as the focus. Although this includes both climate change adaptation and mitigation, the latter contradicts the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and, as such, also contradicts the norm of ownership.

Later in the interview, it became very clear how specific they were that all renewable energy activities cannot be categorized as climate relevant, which was an idea held by nearly all other people interviewed for this study. However, as is visible in the quote development was not problematized, but it had a taken-for-granted quality. This contradicts the doubt that was held by interviewees 2A & 3A, who said that it will take time to see if there are also development outcomes.

I did not ask how the interviewees felt about the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in the context of this program or the ownership of climate change agenda for LDCs. This was due to the fact that I saw it as a part of the program design, which I understood as something that none of the interviewees could really influence, at least not now that the program was up and running. However the amount of greenhouse gas reductions was touched upon in the interviews as I was hoping that it might provide some clues about actual behavior, instead of only talking about how RE is always mitigation.

Some of the interviewees did not want to respond, as the projects were just under implementation and actual results could not yet be known (2A & 3A). The Nordic Development Fund compares investment costs to a roughly agreed price for a carbon ton when evaluating the mitigation potential of projects before implementation. Interviewee 1A responded that the program will receive the information about the amount of mitigation from each individual project when the time comes, but that: "We're talking about very small amounts for the time being. It's negligible but it can be very substantial [later on]." The interviewee went on to say that the aim is to have replicable projects that can be scaled up. Then, in the best case scenario, greenhouse gas emissions mitigation will dramatically increase.

These responses seem to reflect that climate change mitigation is a top priority of the program. This corresponds with the idea that Finland, as an industrialized country, should mitigate climate change. The norm does not specify the context in which this should be done. The people in group A do represent Finland, some directly and others indirectly. There is also a shared understanding

that the projects the EEP supports, which are renewable energy and energy efficiency, do contribute towards this objective. This reflects the framing and understanding of the norm in Finnish Development Policy Documents. As far as the activities are considered to be activities of Finland, there really does not seem to be any contradiction at this point.

5.4.2. “The fact is right, I think on paper we are a development program.” Poverty reduction and ownership in the EEP

As mentioned earlier, the poverty reduction aspect of the EEP seemed more difficult for the donors than mitigation. It was acknowledged that, in general, renewable energy projects are always quite easy to label as mitigation, but much more difficult to put them under poverty reduction. Nevertheless, a focus on economic development was seen as central in another interview:

“The fact is right, I think on paper we are a development program, it’s in fact a program which is between development and economic cooperation, because they could be commercial projects as well. The fact is that it’s a partnership program, it means that it can be research institutions, academics, NGOs, private companies, public companies, everyone can be part of it. From the line of your previous question [on the role of energy in development] [the objective] is to stimulate economic development. To stimulate the development of the area where they are and definitely economic development, sustainable economic development.” (Interview 1A.)

While this response put the link between energy and poverty reduction clearly on how it is meant to work in the program, namely, by bringing about economic development, most of the time this only seemed to be an assumption that justified the approach without putting it explicitly. Still, the idea that energy would actually bring about economic development was questioned in another interview:

“If we have rural electrification projects we always think that would bring along livelihoods for the people but it’s afterwards you can see it’s not always like that. People would use [electricity] for watching TV. It doesn’t automatically bring new jobs. [...] But on the other hand I wouldn’t say that it’s somehow bad if the rural electrification ends for being used for watching TV. We also watch TV and why wouldn’t those people be allowed.” (Interview 2A.)

Here, a link was built to ownership in terms of how the beneficiaries should, and do, have the right to use energy for the purposes they choose. This also shines light on the ‘problem’ many donors are struggling with – that in some cases, there might be a trade-off between achieving results that the donors want and those desired by the recipients. At least here the interviewees seemed to respect this dimension of ownership. With regards to the importance of poverty reduction it

almost seemed like the interviewees would personally want to see it play a bigger role in the program by saying that the poverty reduction component is very small (Interview 2A). Another pointed out that the program has actually been very much focused on technology and that the program design is being improved, as it has not been working out quite as expected (Interview 3a). Both of these responses clearly indicate personal views in the context and wording they were given in. This could be seen as indicating that the donor representatives would have internalized the norm of poverty reduction more strongly than how it has influenced the program design.

The program agenda for climate change mitigation does break the norm of ownership in the form of pushing the agenda to the local priorities. Supporting individual projects does not itself prove this, but in relation to the stated objective these projects can also be thought of as being examples and showcases of the benefits renewable energy can bring.

For one of the interviewees, mitigation was also seen as more important than ownership or poverty reduction: “But if the climate, if the sort of wall comes against you after the climate screening then we forget about the rest. The rest cannot compensate for the climate part.” (Interview 4A). Apart from this, within the program activities, ownership seems to have a larger influence on the activities, although, depending on the particular context of activities, ownership is understood very differently by individuals and also between different individuals.

The program steering committee is composed of a representative from each donor and two representatives from each participating country. This ensures country ownership within the program design as the countries can reject project proposals that they do not see as fitting or responding to national needs⁴⁰ (Interviews 1A, 3A & 5A). The ownership of the final beneficiaries of the projects is naturally limited at least on the dimension that they could enunciate what they want and need. This was confirmed when asked about how it could be done: “Yes, the rural poor themselves will have difficulties to submit proposals, you’re absolutely right and especially to have access to a computer, to fill all terrible headache causing online forms.” Elaborating on how the voices of the rural people can be heard the interviewee continued:

“There are people who are pretty well connected with the local government or the national government or whatsoever, who would be given access, or we would tell what they want to do and then the leader will be the NGO for instance, but the beneficiaries are clearly

⁴⁰ Power relations could be discussed here as the national representatives might try to please the donors in some cases to keep the money flowing in.

identified and when we know exactly which community they work with and what will be benefits for the community.” (Interview 1A.)

This sheds light on the many definitions and different understanding of the concept of ownership. Country representatives are part of the decision-making structure of the program, NGOs are not. However, it is claimed that for example rural poor can have their voices heard through the NGOs. A recent draft on a law governing the work of NGOs in Cambodia has received a lot of international attention as it would significantly reduce which NGOs can register and operate in Cambodia (Guardian 2011). It has been recognized as the government’s response to NGOs criticism of railroad development plans. The government has not been too pleased with people filing complaints and slowing down the process with the help of NGOs.

It can only be asked if an NGO which has publicly criticized a government in any of the Mekong countries would be selected for funding by a ministry representative of that country, which is a step in the EEP project selection. The EEP program does not seem to have a strong link with politically sensitive issues, but many NGOs can work on a number of sectors. Their activities, for example, in land-use issues might put them in a bad light in the eyes of their host country. In this case the EEP has a relatively good level of a country ownership in the project selection process from the participating countries’ governments, but the ownership of civil society organizations does not seem quite as strong. Determining whether the government or civil society organizations present the full variety of the social composition of these countries’ populations is too large of a question for this paper, and, hence this question can unfortunately only be raised here. This example does illustrate very well how country ownership in the spirit of the Paris Declaration is supported by the structure of the program, but that it is a different thing than what democratic ownership would encompass.

The specifics of individual projects were usually not discussed in these interviews, as it was clear from the very beginning that most of the people in this group did not know the individual projects very well. There was one good response which highlighted that the links between sustainability of the results and ownership are often linked. The following is a response to how sustainability is defined:

“It’s to make sure that projects, which have been implemented, will not just die after our support. It is that we are looking very much into the final user, the benefit groups, the target groups; each should have been involved with the project. They are part of the decision-making and even maybe the initialization of the project. That they are involved in all steps.

That the end of our [program] they know how to operate the technology and that they are completely self-sustaining.” (Interview 1A.)

Here ownership is clearly understood as meaning participation in planning and decision-making in a development cooperation intervention. These are also elements that ensure that results and outputs last longer than donor funding. Unfortunately, this was only a single opinion in the interviews with this group. Another interviewee pointed out that once the energy is given to the end beneficiaries they are in charge of how it is used. This would be very weak ownership on this level, as the beneficiaries have ownership only once the energy has been given to them.

Generally, ownership was understood as meaning country participation in decision-making within the program. Also, country ownership was understood as referring to the governments of the target countries as in the Paris Declaration. This points out that, although in setting the agenda, Finland has to some extent contested the LDCs’ right of determining their own priorities, or at least whether the program corresponds with those needs, within the EEP structure country ownership is taken into account. The central underlying idea is that the EEP is supposedly a development cooperation program, not climate finance as such. Although Finland could also have a similar program as part of its climate finance as the case here is development, it seems to be representing a diversion of funds from their purpose. Finland is the actor which is supporting these climate mitigation activities with the EEP.

5.4.3. Conclusions on interviews with group A

With these interviews it became clear that donors and implementers of the EEP program understood mitigation as the main priority of the program. According to the norm of reducing emissions, everyone interviewed here seemed to subscribe to the idea that this is appropriate behavior; it is what is being done. However, no-one raised concerns that mitigation is actually the responsibility of industrialized countries, and reducing emissions in this context is an extension of internationally agreed principles. The amount of mitigation from the program was also seen as negligible. The responses indicate that behavior is appropriate as prescribed by the norm of climate change mitigation and, that there are no obvious material gains from this behavior. This seems to confirm that actors sometimes adopt norms without material incentives (Checkel 1998, 331). It is important to note that people interviewed here represented their organizations, and as such they are all simply ‘just doing their job’. Still, it would seem that the respondents in group A had accepted the validity of the mitigation norm and were behaving accordingly, as well as giving justifications for the behavior, which is said to indicate norm internalization (Allden 2009, 7–8).

Mitigation did seem to have a taken-for-granted quality, as it was not contested at all (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 804).

Still, everyone did describe in length the relevance of the program and projects, and gave an effort in explaining what is being done and why. The practical focus of the program, mainly the promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency, was seen as a link between poverty reduction and climate change mitigation. It was noted that in a renewable energy project mitigation and poverty reduction are inseparable. Judging from results later on it will still be quite easy to see what is achieved and what the program is actually doing. The importance of providing access to energy, and particularly access to renewable energy, is seen as being an important component required for achieving poverty reduction. Poverty reduction was rarely brought up by the respondents, and, when asked about the role of poverty reduction in the program, some saw it as secondary, while others personally thought that it should have a more central role.

Some of the responses given reflected that not all individuals completely agreed about what should be done compared with what the program is doing. This would indicate that, at least in some points the interviewees also revealed personal opinions. The interviews did also seem to confirm the picture received from the documents that the focus and approach of the program were clearly geared towards mitigation activities.

The responses were split to some extent on the role of poverty reduction in the program, and whether it was seen as actual being done in the program or not. Still, the contents for the concept of ownership varied even more, apart from the strict definition for country ownership within the program. All the respondents thought that national representation was good in the steering committee, and ownership was meaningful on this level. In the relationship of mitigation and ownership mitigation was highlighted as the priority, even though in the international treaties on climate change and aid effectiveness developing countries' right to development is acknowledged.

Framing mitigation as being compatible with poverty reduction and inseparable in the form of renewable energy and energy efficiency helps to divert attention away from the fact that they have incompatibilities in terms of for whom the norms prescribe the behavior in question. The beneficiaries of the short-term results of poverty reduction and climate change mitigation are also very different.

For norm diffusion as the spread of ideas to actors, the people in group A seemed to adhere to all of the norms to some extent. Still, mitigation seemed to possess taken-for-granted qualities which were not as clear for poverty reduction. If the MDGs are the reference point as Fukuda-Parr & Hulme (2011) suggest, than this is something that these respondents did not see to be happening very strongly in the program. Country ownership, as strictly defined in the Paris Declaration, was most clearly understood with the same content. However it was only discussed within the program decision-making structure.

The interviews with donor and EEP staff were generally more focused on the program. I will now turn to interviews with national representatives in the EEP structure and the projects funded by the EEP. From here on the focus will turn more towards what is being done in the projects themselves, and less attention will be given to the structure of the program. This will provide more insights into how the local populations view the program's approach and also how these people implementing the projects adhere to the norms. I will take these to be an indication of what the behavior actually looks like.

5.5. Norm internalization and norm content

This chapter follows the structure of the previous one. I will start by presenting my assumptions and approach to this chapter and these interview and then turn to explore mitigation before moving on to ownership and poverty reduction. Group B interviews consist of the EEP national representatives of Cambodia and Lao PDR and the projects, which both are funded by the EEP in order to carry out its functions. The responses from this group were generally a lot more scattered than before. Also, the interviews with this group varied considerable in some issues. While some respondents gave good and clear responses others seemed to circle around the issues, while never quite responding to the questions I asked or mentioning anything I was looking for.

I suppose these organizations carrying out these projects are doing so because it somehow fits with what they do. The EEP is a mechanism funding activities that corresponds with what these organizations do. Therefore, it would seem obvious that these organizations have applied for funding from the mechanism as private companies, NGOs and universities, and as such, they are not committed to any of the norms in this study. For most private companies, generating profits constitutes appropriate behavior, NGOs can perform a number of tasks, and some of them do exist mainly for the purpose of poverty eradication.

Finland, as a party to the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol, has committed to climate change mitigation. As a country, it can create and use a variety of different incentives to get actors to contribute towards this objective. As such, I take these projects to mostly be an actualization of Finland's policies, but also to shed light on whether the individuals carrying out these tasks personally subscribe to these norms.

Naturally, the projects stand in a different position in relation to the program, as compared with the previous group of interviewees. The people interviewed in group A represented the donors and the program. The people interviewed in group B represent their own organization or the countries. As such, the assumption is that their motivations and involvement in the program can stem from very different starting points than the people in group A.

Presumably, to receive funding from the EEP, their project proposals need to correspond with what is being funded by the program. Still, their take on the issues of mitigation, poverty reduction and ownership can be very different. An issue I want to raise here is that the interviews dealt with the issues from a practical standpoint. This was mostly due to the fact that it became clear to me very early in the first interviews that talking about abstract concepts did not provide very good results.

My assumption is that the projects assume that their behavior is appropriate, as they have been granted financing to carry out the activities they proposed. As such, the focus of the interviews has been quite practical in order to evaluate what are the activities and behavior actually promoted by the EEP. The projects are not the final beneficiaries, whom I unfortunately could not interview due to time, money and language restrictions. In the interviews, the incentives for adopting the technologies or ideas promoted were also discussed. The responses to these were of a practical nature. I will present these responses as they were given by the interviewees and, after that, explore what kind of beliefs and norms could be seen as informing the behavior.

5.5.1. Mitigation

Most of the people in this group saw the mitigation potential as negligible, which was very clear from some of their responses. The mitigation potential from energy in the case of Laos was questioned by a project leader:

“The mitigation issue in Laos is of course different from many other countries, because at the moment the emissions in Laos are very small, they are only coming from the transport sector and electricity production is totally hydro based at the moment, and there's not very

much industries which are using fossil fuels. Well, I think they use a little bit of coal.” (Interview 8B.)

Another pointed out the focus of their project:

“We are connecting people, poor people, who have low consumption, so that means that savings of energy, [are unlikely] to be very high. [...] If you want really to save a lot of energy, you have to work with either big consumers, with one big consumer it can work or very, very large scale consumers. [...] One or two kilowatts it’s not going very far.” (Interview 7B.)

While this was well summarized in one sentence: “We don’t have big mitigation projects because we don’t have such potential [in Cambodia]” (Interview 12B).

If actual behavior is an indication of the internalization of a norm, what is the principle or actual results that count in these types of projects? I would like to think it is the outcomes for norms that do not prescribe how, but what should be the result of the appropriate behavior. As such, a number of activities can refer to the norm, but as long as it remains a cosmetic trick, I would like to think that it is not quite what the norm prescribes. Evaluating this can be extremely difficult, especially when most outcomes are expected to be visible only after a long period of time.

As for mitigation, the ultimate objective is reducing CO₂ emissions. At the moment there are negligible quantifiable mitigation from the EEP and its projects. Therefore, EEP as a program is not achieving what mitigation is supposed to achieve. The projects were not seen as bringing about significant emission reductions nor was the potential for emissions reductions in either country considered to be meaningful. Still, mitigation was seen by many as an integral part of the project (Interviews 6B, 8B, 9B, 10B & 12B), and some of the respondents also praised the approach of bringing environmental and energy issues into consideration in a single approach (Interviews 9B, 10B, 11B & 12B). These responses also reflected how RE & EE projects go nicely together and are good for the countries’ development, but most of them did not mention mitigation explicitly in this context. In one of the responses the national priority of poverty reduction was emphasized as well as bringing up that there are no mitigation obligations for LDCs:

“A country like Cambodia has no obligation yet to reduce emissions but this arrangement can allow our country to participate in greenhouse gas mitigation reduction activity while still supporting sustainable development and poverty reduction objectives. So these are very relevant and of course these are very closely linked, because addressing environment doesn’t mean hampering development. [...] So I think it’s just a very clear illustration how these two objectives can go along with each other, and this is very relevant for a developing country where the first priority is poverty reduction. But we do things in a different way, it’s

not a traditional way. So this is very important for us and it's gone along well. But again, sometime you cannot rely entirely on market, the way it is structured now. That's why I think support from Annex 1 countries is very important to pursue these objectives." (Interview 12B.)

This single response quite successfully pointed out a number of issues that are at the heart of this study. First, it noted, that Cambodia aims at poverty reduction and sustainable development. Second, that this kind of arrangements, like the EEP, can help a least developed country to participate to international efforts as addressing environment is compatible with poverty reduction. Still, a country like Cambodia has no obligation to reduce emissions. The EEP promotes a new way of doing things, something that is not traditional. The support of industrialized countries is important because the markets are not working reliable. Last but not least, in this response the idea that including a carbon component into a project makes in more attractive to donors.

Contrary to what some of the people in group A suspected this respondent saw that poverty reduction and climate change mitigation do go hand-in-hand. This issue was also raised by two other interviewees from group B, the other saying: "if you can make it work it's wonderful because it's two things at the same time," but he went on that at the moment one can't say if there will be any double-benefits, it's too early to say (Interview 6B), like two interviewees in group A. Another response also pointed to the win-win objectives:

"They could go [together] but I'm not sure if they always go. Finding win-win type of approaches and projects may not always be very easy and to see if there are synergies between these different aspects. Well, of course the idea that in a project there should be both of these aspects, it may increase the kind of the innovativeness of the proposals and in that way it is good to have this type of two different aspects in the program." (Interview 8B.)

The interviews with group B brought up a number of practical issues. Nearly all of them agreed that mitigation is an integral part, but many also emphasized that no real mitigation takes place in the projects and that there is no potential for mitigation in the countries. If one thinks about what the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol prescribe, this is interestingly different. They define the objective, that CO₂ emissions should be reduced, but not specifically how. The people in group B adhere to the norm of mitigation in that that is what they are doing and is being done with the EEP, but without significant emission reductions. As such, they seem to adhere to appropriate means, not appropriate ends.

Some saw environment and energy as being compatible and going hand-in-hand, while others questioned whether the outcomes would really be there and pointed towards the design of the program. Interviewee 12B was the only person out of everyone interviewed who explicitly said what I had been expecting: mitigation is not a priority or on the agenda in these countries. Poverty reduction is the first priority. Judging from the assumptions I had when I started the research I found this a little bit surprising. Even this respondent emphasized that the objectives go together. This was a view held by the large majority in this study. Few questioned if this is very easy to do in practice. From a development effectiveness point of view it is the results that matter, not how attractive the idea is. As such, I still find it difficult to comprehend why, mitigation is so important in this context, for Finland, for the EEP and for the people carrying projects for the EEP, if it is not really contributing towards emission reductions. This seems to point towards the claim that Krook & True (2011) advocate, that the norms that spread in the international system are rarely clearly defined but vague in their content allowing for different interpretations. Still, mitigation seems to possess qualities that can be incompatible with the norm of ownership understood with reference to national priorities. Also, it would seem that the norm of poverty reduction would allow for an even larger variety of interpretations of means that can be utilized to achieve its objective of poverty eradication. However, in the EEP, it seems that most people would choose mitigation over poverty reduction, if such a choice needed to be made.

5.5.2. It's a fine idea but – poverty reduction and ownership in the EEP

As I pointed out earlier, most of the interviewees did not refer to poverty reduction directly from their own initiative. When asked directly how the project contributes towards poverty reduction, or what the role of energy is, the responses were still fairly vague and non-descriptive. I do acknowledge that this could have been due my lack of competence in conducting interviews, but if this is the case, I find it difficult to understand why mitigation and climate change were still better described and the projects' relations to these issues were directly explained by nearly everyone.

The objectives of the projects analyzed can easily be categorized into two groups according to their main functions. Each is either providing clean renewable energy to people or raising awareness and building capacity on issues related to renewable energy and energy efficiency. Providing energy is seen as a means to achieve – or at least contribute towards – poverty reduction.

The different ways in which energy and electricity can increase productivity and contribute to poverty reduction were described in many of the interviews (8B, 9B & 10B), with the following

metaphor being used to describe energy: “Like blood in the body. It’s one of the key components in the economy. In a broader sense if we look at poverty eradication, it’s also of course linked to that.” (Interview 11B). Still, some felt it was worth emphasizing that the positive outcomes are not automatic. One of the respondents directly questioned an example often used to describe the benefits of energy:

“When you bring energy you believe that all people will be able to study a longer time. Usually when you bring energy the first things they invest in is not in books but in a TV. So the creativity [of the idea] is not wonderful.” (Interview 7B.)

Another interviewee also pointed out the importance of where the energy is used:

“For energy to reduce poverty very essential is for what purposes the energy is used. Of course one important aspect is that, it’s a kind of a survival strategy that one must have food to eat, to be a living poor person and not a dead one, while of course that [poor people dying] reduces poverty. But in a way it’s this type of a survival and its type of energy used, is one aspect which as such does not reduce poverty of course, but is kind of a starting point.” (Interview 8B.)

The EEP’s role in contributing to poverty reduction was seen as raising awareness and teaching people about energy use (Interviews 8B, 10B, 11B & 12B), but, most importantly in reducing the price of the technologies used (Interviews 6B, 7B, 9B, 10B & 12B). The price of renewable energy technologies is seen as the biggest obstacle to wider adoption and use in the countries. Although the EEP was seen as a mechanism for scaling up the use of renewable energy technologies (Interviews 6B & 7B), many questioned whether there is any potential for replicating the projects now funded by the EEP due to the high cost of the technologies (Interview 11B) while another said that, in the best case scenario, the involvement of the donor is required for at least five years, usually longer. With renewable energy technology there is always a subsidy somewhere from a donor or the government (Interview 7B). As such, the sustainability of the outputs of the program seem questionable, and as was mentioned by some earlier (Interviews 2A, 3A & 6B), only time will show what the actual benefits will be.

The national priority is to bring grid connection to the people. After that, the countries can focus on the objectives of the EEP (Interview 9B), and while more investment would be needed for renewable energy:

“The government does not have more money because most of money is spent in more important and urgent priorities. Some politicians do not see the importance of renewable energy and energy efficiency at this moment.” (Interview 11B.)

The responses from “the field” seem to reflect clearly that the agenda pursued is not a priority in these countries. This seems to confirm that the norm of ownership is being broken with the EEP when it is considered a development cooperation program. While the EEP has received a green light from the recipient governments, they do not seem to have a stake in what the EEP is doing. This would also seem to confirm that the LDCs have trouble setting their own agenda (Mosley et al. 1991). Moreover, even though Laos is preparing a national renewable energy strategy, it is largely done with the support of Finland.

This lack of meaningful commitment can be seen to be due to the norms driving the agenda of the program, with climate change mitigation being the most important one. Acharaya used localization for the process in which an international norm is made to fit with the local hierarchy of norms. The term is used very much in the same meaning as I have used internalization earlier in this study. With localization, the local actors have a crucial role. He defined localization as “the active construction (through discourse, framing, grafting, and cultural selection) of foreign ideas by local actors, which results in the former developing significant congruence with local beliefs and practices.” (2004, 244.) Localization divides the process roughly around similar lines that Risse et al. (1999) used for states’ adoption of international norms, but with more specification on cultural factors in explaining which and whose ideas matter. Localization takes account of local beliefs which are a part of the legitimate normative order in the domestic setting. There can be norm conflicts in a local setting between the new international norm and the existing domestic normative environment. His main theoretical argument was that local norm-takers actively build congruence between international and local norms (Acharaya 2004, 241).

All of the local respondents believed the EEP to be very important and relevant for the countries. Renewable energy and energy efficiency were seen as being compatible with poverty reduction and other national priorities. When asked about how the EEP fits the countries’ priorities some were very clear that the governments think that it does not. This was also a point brought up in the EEP program document. Regardless of whether people viewing the EEP have positively sought to be engaged with the program or if the EEP has changed their views and opinions, based on this small sample this difference seemed quite relevant.

A low level of localization of a norm can be due to institutional resistance, lack of political commitment, lack of awareness or an inadequate institutional framework. International actors can

also push for the institutionalization of a norm in ways which makes the national actors reject the norm as something foreign due to the ways the norms are introduced (Allden 2009, 34).

There are three different possibilities for how and why localization occurs. First is the idea of a local initiative, which means that local actors actively pursue adopting international norms instead of having a passive role as a recipient. Second, recipients can actively seek adjustments to the shape and content of foreign ideas to fit with local beliefs and practices. This can take a form of cultural selection where only certain suitable norms are borrowed which can enhance the prestige of the borrower. Third is the idea that new norms amplify local beliefs and may enhance existing beliefs in ways which bring with them more legitimacy and authority to the local norm-takers (Acharaya 2004, 244–7).

While I do not feel that I possess sufficient information to be able to assess the first two of these possibilities, I would like to point out how the compatibility of RE for the national priorities was emphasized by most of the local respondents. Elaborating on the role of local norm-takers, the concept of socialization has been used to describe the process in which norms become embedded into local communities. It's been argued that the main agents for norm diffusion at the domestic level are national elites and the masses (Flockhart 2005 cit. in Allden 2009, 19). Successful norm diffusion from the international domain into a domestic setting would thus encompass the national elite and the masses becoming socialized into the preferred behavior. Socialization means that the "recipients" have accepted the validity of the norm and started to behave in accordance with it (Allden 2009, 7–8). This kind of socialization is based on the premise that there is a socializer, an international actor, and a socializee, which is assumed to adopt the norm. This setting also assumes that the relationship between the two is unequal, as the former possesses qualities that give it an edge to assert its influence over the socializee (Flockhart 2005 cit. in Allden 2009, 18).

The actors interviewed did seem to have localized, or to be somewhat socialized to the norm of mitigation when operationalized through renewable energy or energy efficiency projects. All of them can also be considered to represent the elite in the national countries. They are not the highest of the high, but they all do rank quite highly in the national hierarchies due to their posts in the ministries. The content of the mitigation norm has changed, or at least it has been attached different meanings than it has in the UNFCCC. Actors commonly seem to understand these new forms as appropriate. Interestingly it seems that mitigation is seen as appropriate behavior from a

normative standpoint. Mitigation is the right thing to do. The fact that actual mitigation of greenhouse gases is negligible seems to indicate that the causal properties of mitigation are not as important.

The normative prescription of poverty reduction is refused, possibly due to uncertainty over the means and causal mechanisms to contribute towards its objective. Ownership as an idea of enhancing the effectiveness of aid seems also mostly refuted which is interesting in the light of the reasons given to adhering to the norm of mitigation but not poverty reduction.

The national governments and people consider price to be the biggest obstacle for adopting renewable energy. Many companies targeting western tourists do make these investments as they see it as a marketing advantage (Interview 7B). As such, the focus of the program seems to be a little off. The compatibility of poverty reduction and climate change mitigation makes renewable energy seem very attractive for many actors. This compatibility also avails for the interpretation that renewable energy projects are poverty reduction projects, with a complementary benefit of also mitigating climate change. Unfortunately in practice many actors seem to be looking at this approach the other way around. Some actors see it as problematic that the EEP functions only in English with just introductory briefs translated into local languages (Interview 9B), while others raised concern over the high rejection rate for projects in Laos and Cambodia (Interviews 9B, 10B, 12B).

Actually, the people interviewed that raised these concerns were all local. None of the Europeans raised any questions on this issue (Interviews 1A–5A & 6B–8B). In fact, in three out of the four projects under scrutiny in this study, the project leader is European with only one project run by a local organization. Everyone pointed out that there is really not enough local capacity in the field of renewable energy (Interviews 6B–12B). This raises some questions about the demand-driven approach of the EEP. The scope of activities is fairly large and the approach has been praised by many as allowing for organizations to apply funding for projects according to their own initiative. Still, this “demand driven” approach to climate change mitigation in any LDC country is problematic as the demand does not refer to the needs or demands of the recipient country in question, but to actors within that country and, in the case of the EEP, also to actors outside the countries.

The demand in the case of climate change mitigation is created outside the context when the process takes place in developing countries. In some cases, this can result in the demand being

answered by actors with a background and a mindset similar to where the demand is created, rather than the geographical place where these activities take place. Although the program makes an effort to distinguish projects that truly respond to local needs rather than serving only needs of foreign consultants (Interview 2A), this is not what ownership of an agenda means, and a demand for funding in such a case is no proof that it would be otherwise. This is not to say that the projects that the EEP supports could not be very successful in providing clean energy to the rural poor that earlier lacked access to reliable energy, but that if these expected results are fulfilled, it is unlikely due to the renewable energy aspect within the project, but that results become realized in spite of the focus on renewable energy.

5.5.3. The role of the EEP in diffusing norms

The role of institutions and especially professional training has been deemed as central for the ideas, norms and values that individuals assume. According to Finnemore & Sikkink (1998), professional training is not only a transfer of technical knowledge but it also “actively socializes people to value certain things above others.” They anticipated that the normative effects of these changes are likely to grow stronger and have policy implications in the international system. (905.) The organizational background of an individual has been claimed to serve as a reasonable proxy for the ideas that individuals share due to the beliefs adopted from professional training in a particular institution (Chwieroth 2007, 6).

Although not the focus of this study and as such no clear conclusion can be drawn from this, the results might indicate these kinds of findings. The role of energy was rarely questioned for bringing about development and poverty reduction. Then again, most people, if not all, did have a background, and often also an education, from a field that focuses on energy, often a university degree from a technical field. Another big distinction was in how the backgrounds of the people were roughly categorized as western or non-western. This seemed to play a significant role in how open the people were in the interviews. I suppose this is also a value or a norm. However, most importantly, there seemed to be a significant difference between the people interviewed and between how the interviewed people described the opinions and approaches of others in Cambodia in the Lao PDR.

It would actually seem that the EEP really does not have an effect on the diffusion of the norms and, as such, should not be considered a mechanism for the process of diffusion. The definition for norm diffusion is also a little vague as a process can encompass a variety of things, activities and time frames. At least according to the process described by Finnemore & Sikkink (1998) and Risse

et al. (1999) it would appear that it takes some time for ideas to become internalized. However, I was expecting that the program would have had a stronger influence on what was actually being carried out under it. The analysis indicates that the Europeans have actually internalized the idea of climate change mitigation, while the populations in Cambodian and the Lao PDR are viewed as not subscribing to the idea. Some interviewees thought that most of the populations probably do not know what climate change is (10B, 12B). A bit surprising was how the Cambodians and Laotians involved in the EEP mostly adhered to the norm of climate change mitigation.

The EEP does not seem to be a mechanism for norm diffusion as studied in this research. It seems more likely that the ideas and understandings the interviewees held were mostly preconceived. However, based on the literature describing the role of different actors in norm diffusion coupled with the objectives of the EEP and how the interviewees understood the norms, the EEP can, indeed, be seen as a mechanism promoting these norms and pushing them to the local landscapes.

Framing the issues of poverty reduction and climate change mitigation as inseparable under renewable energy projects was primarily adhered to by most of the interviewees, but with some of the Europeans pointing out that it might not actually be so efficient for the results and outcomes of the program and its individual projects. These ideas were most strongly pronounced by the projects' leaders. This might not be very surprising when one considers that the donors' representatives' are probably not expected to say that what they finance is not really contributing quite as it is expected, if that is the case.

The demand for responding to climate change has been created internationally and the responsibility for doing something about it, or at least financing the activities is seen as being the responsibility of industrialized countries. European actors seem to adhere to this agenda, apparently at home and abroad, assuming they consider mitigation appropriate in all contexts, not only in LDCs. The focus of the agenda on climate change is not really problematic itself, but the use of ODA for this purpose give the appearance that funds meant for development cooperation are used for climate change mitigation.

Norm diffusion from the EEP to actors implementing the projects cannot really be said to be happening based on this study. I take this to follow from the differences in opinions and views of the respondents. Moreover, it would seem that the ideas or norms influencing the actors implementing the projects with EEP funding have absorbed the ideas beforehand from different

sources. On a general level the norms are present, but looking at specific prescriptions of the norms, differences in how they are understood become apparent. This might also be due to the somewhat vague content of the norms in the international treaties. Furthermore, many of the interviewees did see raising awareness on climate change and building capacity as its central functions. “Educating” the local population, and perhaps also other decision-makers, was mentioned occasionally in the interviews.

6. Conclusions

In this research I set off to explore the emerging trend in which climate change is being mainstreamed into development cooperation through the case of the Energy and Environment Partnership with the Mekong Region. The approach chosen to explore this question was to observe the diffusion of the climate change mitigation norm that calls for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The research question was formulated as: how does the norm of climate change mitigation diffuse and inform the behavior of actors in the EEP Mekong? Diffusion was taken to refer to the spread of ideas, and norms were defined as *shared expectations about appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity*.

The EEP does not implement activities, but provides funding for different actors that carry out activities that correspond with its objectives of contributing to improved access to energy, energy services and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. With climate change mitigation, the appropriate behavior was taken from the United Nations Framework Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, which put forward the idea⁴¹ that greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced by the industrialized countries. As such, the appropriate behavior was reducing greenhouse gas emission, in other words, climate change mitigation. Although reducing greenhouse gas emission requires behavior, this norm does not tell *how* to mitigate climate change in practice, nor do norms specifically prescribe when this behavior should be exercised. Everything a country does cannot subscribe to every norm. Furthermore, a country is not a single actor. The distinction for this study was made based on internationally agreed standards for behavior concerning climate change mitigation and poverty reduction.

⁴¹ The difference between ideas and norms being that there can be many kinds of ideas but a norm is a specific kind of idea which is held collectively and prescribes behavior.

Finland is committed to development cooperation, which aims at poverty reduction. Standards for development cooperation are given by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and money used for development cooperation is counted as official development aid (ODA). Finland has also committed Fast Start Finance to assist developing countries in dealing with climate change; this includes climate change mitigation. The EEP Mekong is an ODA funded program, and, as such, its objective should be poverty reduction. If, while doing so, it also manages to mitigate climate change, this would constitute what most people would call effective use of funds. However, if outcomes show that the program mainly contributes to climate change mitigation, then it is a case where development funds are being diverted for climate change mitigation.

In addition to looking at the norm of climate change mitigation, the norms of poverty reduction and ownership were also investigated in this study, as they were seen as also influencing the EEP significantly. The norm of poverty reduction being similar to climate change mitigation in its properties as prescribing that extreme, dehumanizing poverty is morally unacceptable and should be eradicated. The norm of ownership is somehow different as it informs donor – recipient relations. In a strict sense, I chose to interpret this as stating that partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, strategies and co-ordinate development actions. Even though this could be said to be the institutionalized form of this norm, it is commonly understood to inform all processes in development cooperation, not only the relations between donors and partners. Although this norm could also be taken to be the end or an outcome, I found it more useful to look at it as informing relations within processes.

The research was confined to looking at the diffusion from the international treaties to the Finnish Policies and the EEP, although it was recognized that this was not the only direction in which ideas and norms can diffuse. In theory, it could actually be the case that Finland pushed these ideas to the international society. However, this was outside the scope of this study, and, as such, I also adopted language in which I referred to the process, as Finland would be in the receiving end from the international level.

I started by looking at the institutionalization of the norms. The content and definitions for the norms were taken as they are institutionalized in international treaties, conventions and declarations. I then turned to look at Finnish Development Policy and the program documents of the EEP. The three norms under focus were clearly present in these documents with references

made to the international agreements, and, as such, it seemed that diffusion had successfully taken place. The norms were institutionalized in Finnish Policy documents and also the EEP program documents. Still, in the EEP documents climate change mitigation took up a lot more space and, where discussed, was described more in depth than poverty reduction. However, I do not take this to be conclusive. Both of these norms did seem to be institutionalized in the program documents, although this was more explicit for mitigation. Ownership was touched upon in the EEP documents, but mostly in descriptions of the national priorities of Cambodia and the Lao PDR, not explicitly referring to the norm. On this level, the program document contradicted itself in the sense that it stated the EEP objectives as being compatible with national priorities, but also mentioned that grid extension is a national priority in both countries, and it poses a risk to the outcomes of the EEP.

With regards to mitigation, the Development Policy Guidelines for Environment gave new frames for the norm. They stated that climate change mitigation and poverty reduction are complementary and cannot be viewed as separate issues. This idea differed significantly from most of the academic literature on combining mitigation and poverty reduction, as they noted that they very rarely go hand-in-hand, and different measures are usually needed for the issues.

After looking at the institutionalization of the norms, I turned to the interviews with the actors working with the EEP. This was done in order to explore how the actors understood the norms and also to look at the internalization of the norms. Internalization can be said to be a deeper level of adherence to a norm than norm institutionalization. Looking only at institutionalization does not tell us sufficiently whether actors are only paying lip service to the norm in question or whether the norm has actual influence on behavior. Strictly speaking, the norm of climate change mitigation prescribes behavior for states, not individuals. As such, the main focus was still on Finland and the EEP taken as embodying Finnish behavior. Still, it was not limited to Finland and adherence of individuals to the norms was also touched upon.

The people interviewed were divided into two groups. The first group, which represented donors and the program, was called group A in the analysis. The second group, which included country representatives and people implementing the projects that are funded by the EEP, was collectively referred to as group B. While interviews with group A focused on understanding the program better and how the norms are understood and defined, the interviews with group B focused mostly on the individual projects and, as such, they dealt with actual behavior and therefore

reflected the internalization of the norms. At this level, understandings of norms sometimes varied quite significantly, which would indicate, that while the general ideas might have been diffused, this would not hold for the specific contents of some of the norms.

What was clear was that the focus of the program and its projects is climate change mitigation. In the EEP, climate change mitigation is framed to be compatible with poverty reduction in the form of renewable energy and energy efficiency. This idea is adhered to, but some of the interviewees emphasized that only time will show if there are also outputs for poverty reduction. Indeed, while both mitigation and poverty reduction were present in the program documents, it was commonly understood by the people interviewed that climate change mitigation is the main focus of the program. This indicated that the EEP was mainly paying lip service to poverty reduction, even acknowledging the different dimensions and measures for poverty. Taking this to reflect if the norms are diffused to the extent that they influence behavior, it seems to hold for mitigation, but not for poverty reduction.

The issue of mitigation turned even more interesting when the outcomes of the projects were discussed. While most people recognized that the EEP is about climate change mitigation, a good number of people also pointed out that the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the EEP projects or the program as a whole are negligible. In the UNFCCC the norm has been defined as prescribing that emissions should be reduced, but it does not signify how emissions should be reduced. This points out that the norm of mitigation has diffused, but its content has changed in the process. It seems that in this case the idea of mitigation is important. Everyone interviewed agreed that mitigation was what they and the program were doing, but also that actual mitigation was non-existent. They seemed to subscribe to the norm of mitigation, but understand that the mitigation was about *means* of achieving results, not about actual *results*.

Promoting the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency is the main focus of the EEP. Renewable energy is understood to be clean energy, and compared with any baseline used for calculating energy production, it is also understood to represent climate change mitigation. Taking that material realities gain meaning through social interaction, renewable energy is framed as representing, or simply, is representing, climate change mitigation. There is also an issue with how norms are defined. Even though there is a wide agreement on the definition, at least in the sense that most definitions are extremely similar in what they refer to, they do not tell which norms to

choose, as most international agreements hold a number of prescriptions, ideas and statements about what appropriate behavior should be, and I am not sure how a theory could tell that.

Still, my interpretation has been to evaluate the norms to some extent based on outcomes, not the processes. Renewable energy could be understood as a process of climate change mitigation. In this case, the scale of the outcomes becomes secondary. In this sense, the norm of climate change mitigation has diffused and become internalized within the EEP to the extent that it does influence actual behavior.

But what then explains the result that the norm of climate change mitigation is internalized in the program, but poverty reduction is only institutionalized in the documents and does not seem to influence what the behavior is aiming for, at least in the sense of how the actors understand it? A number of different reasons have been offered in the literature on norms to explain why norms can gain ground and adherence and what conditions affect this ranging, from organizational structures, compatibility with local belief structures and the way norms are introduced to international pressure, the role of NGOs, the specific or vague content of a norm and simple or complex prescriptions that the norms hold.

Unfortunately, I did not conduct the research focusing on this issue, but based on the analysis, I believe I can at least elaborate on this issue to some extent. Thinking about the behavior prescribed by poverty reduction and climate change mitigation on a general level, I find these very similar. They both prescribe that something should be done to achieve an outcome. Since, in a strict sense, mitigation is the responsibility of industrialized countries, it leaves a number of different ways of behaving towards this end. A country, as an actor, usually does not have significant emissions, but the emissions are generated by actors *within* a country. As such, a country can create incentives or punishments that will influence the behavior of actors. On this level, nearly the same holds for poverty reduction. There are no simple measures, but a large variety of approaches and steps that can contribute towards poverty reduction. As such, I would see the content of the norms as prescribing behavior on roughly a similar level of specificity. However, from here, one distinction between these two norms becomes apparent. Even though the norms as such do not prescribe *how*, in practice, renewable energy seems to be understood as climate change mitigation. On the other hand, energy is not understood as a direct and sole contributor to poverty reduction, a number of different elements need to be in place for the results to materialize.

It is easier to measure mitigation of a single solar panel, for example, in quantitative terms than to quantify the results of the solar panel for poverty reduction, where the process is not as simple. A bottom line is fairly easy to create when talking about how much less a solar panel pollutes compared with coal combustion, for example. However, if a person or village's income increases, it can rarely be said that it was the new access to energy that provided the income. The income usually does not follow from the use of solar panels alone, but a number of other factors need to be in place, for example, access to markets, for the opportunities created by the energy to be realized. This is only speaking in terms of income generation. A number of qualitative indicators can be used for evaluating whether the quality of life has increased. However, those measures are usually considered more difficult and prone to interpretation, compared with the amount of tCO₂e emissions avoided.

Although it looks unlikely that the quantifiable emissions reductions would be significant in any sense, there seems to be a relatively direct means that can be taken that, in theory, does bring the desired outcomes. The same does not hold for poverty reduction when it comes to energy. With poverty reduction, there is an additional question of who is benefiting, while for climate change mitigation the answer is straight forward – it is the climate.

Turning to the norm of ownership, there are two key points to make. First, country ownership within the program, in the form of the steering committee and its significant role as selecting projects, is fulfilled as prescribed in the Paris Declaration. This view was confirmed in the interviews. However, looking within the program surpasses the fact that the agenda that the EEP is driving, namely climate change mitigation, is by definition and with reference to national priorities of Cambodia and the Lao PDR, not a priority for the countries. This is also illustrative of the second point. The norm of ownership, as strictly understood here according to how it reads in the Paris Declaration, is not how ownership is generally understood. It is understood to inform processes on a number of different levels within development cooperation. While this study can only be said to provide anecdotal evidence of this issue, it would seem to point to the direction clearly articulated in academic literature and voiced by a number of NGOs, that the concept of ownership is understood in so many different ways with no clear definition, that its influence can be questioned. Actors seem to be subscribing to ownership where it fits their needs or when it is easy to accommodate.

Looking at the individuals, it turned out that, perhaps, approaching individual beliefs based on the respondents' background, and not their relation to the EEP, could have yielded very interesting results. It seemed that the responses given by people with a western background seemed to be in line on some issues, whereas people with non-western background held, to some extent, different views. I do not feel confident drawing any conclusions from this for three reasons. First, some theories do emphasize how educational or organizational background can work as a significant proxy for ideas held by an individual. However, I did not gather any information of this sort from the interviewees. This feeling is more strongly based on surnames of the interviewees. Second, none of the questions were designed to reflect any of these issues, and they were not taken into account when conducting the interviews. This idea only dawned on me when writing my analysis, and, as such, I do not feel there is sufficient proof. Third, I am not absolutely sure how I should handle the responses from two out of the four persons interviewed with non-western backgrounds. I do not feel this challenges what I have presented earlier, as two people out of twelve would not alter the results. However, two out of four represent half of the non-westerners interviewed and, as such, could turn the results, within that group, into any direction, if they were considered to form a group. The issue is that I am not sure whether I was treated as an agent for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and, as such, could not be spoken to openly. There were some indications that this was not the case, but I am not entirely convinced of this. I am not sure whether these two interviewees felt that providing wrong responses would cause them trouble. This could have made some of their answers more diplomatic than what they actually thought was the case. Still, the results of the overall research would remain the same if the answers from these two interviews were left out altogether.

To conclude, the norm of climate change mitigation seems to have been diffused to the EEP and also to the individuals. Behavior within the EEP was described in a way that implies that the norm has been internalized by the actors, meaning it has a taken-for-granted quality. Still, this depends on how the norm of climate change mitigation is understood. When it is understood as a process, as a means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, then the norm has, indeed, diffused, and it informs behavior. If it is understood via quantifiable outcomes, the answer is slightly different. It seems that norms do not always have their intended effects. To a certain extent this is a different discussion relating to the effectiveness of aid and climate finance. With regards to the prescription of the Kyoto Protocol, this is an important aspect, and, as such, I do not feel it can be overlooked. I find this also important if one wants to look for different possible reasons for why Finland is

implementing the EEP. There are no obvious material gains for Finland as a country, but a small amount of the funding does go to Finnish actors. Although the project selection criteria favors Nordic actors, their share of the organizations that have received funding from the EEP is very small when considering this fact.

Based on the literature on norms used for this article, I find theories of norms and norm diffusion not to be able to provide a satisfactory answer about which norms matter. A number of different explanations are offered in the literature, but when it comes to this study, I do not see how analyzing the norms as they are institutionalized in the international treaties and declarations, could have pointed out which of the norms have the most influence in this particular case. If anything, it should have been the norm of poverty reduction that had been around for a long time, strongly institutionalized in international treaties and national documents, adhered to by the vast majority of actors with no obvious organizational or local obstacles. Still, in the EEP, it was not realized. Instead, climate change mitigation was adhered to. Based on this study, it cannot be said why Finland has initiated this program, but it is quite clear what the program is doing and how people implementing activities understand it.

The main focus of this study was not to explore reasons for which norms matter; the best explanation I can provide is that there is a relatively simple and practical way to implement mitigation – as an idea – which points to clear ways of implementing the norm, but not what the norm as such prescribes. However, I am only able to say this as a result of the research, and I do not feel there was any way to see in advance that this would be the reason why the EEP and all the individuals interviewed would adhere to the norm of mitigation, but not poverty reduction. For the interviewees, this does draw from what the EEP aims at. Surprising, at least to myself, was that most of the interviewees did not question the agenda or the approach. With regards to ownership, in relation to the two other norms in this study, it seems easier to say that ownership does not have a prominent role due to the varying understandings and definitions given to it. It is unclear what the influence of the norm of ownership on the program is, other than the composition of the steering committee. The most prominent explanation would seem to be that policy makers tend to favor programs in which clear concrete results can be demonstrated, although they are yet to be realized in the program. Unfortunately it seems that the new objective of climate change mitigation has sidelined the traditional aim of poverty reduction in this development cooperation program.

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Interviews (see pp.41 – 44)

Interview1A

Interview2A

Interview3A

Interview4A

Interview5A

Interview6B

Interview7B

Interview8B

Interview9B

Interview10B

Interview11B

Interview12B

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