Of Tree Planting, Salvation and Urbanization

The Role of Evangelical Movements in Adaptive Capacity
Kigali, Rwanda

Johan Sundqvist
Of Tree Planting, Salvation and Urbanization

The role of evangelical movements in adaptive capacity

-Kigali, Rwanda-

Author: Johan Sundqvist
Supervisor: Henrik Ernstson
MSc Thesis — EGG 2011
Stockholm Resilience Center
Submission date: June 30th - 2011
Abstract

Evangelical churches are growing rapidly in Sub-Saharan Africa, in sheer numbers as well as in societal importance. At the same time urbanization and its associated negative environmental and social consequences are putting pressure on many urban social-ecological systems in the global south. The question that this paper raises is how the growing religious social movements frame these change processes and their role in them? With its rapid urbanization and high church involvement in civil society Kigali, Rwanda serves as the case study.

The study, conducted through semi-structured interviews with church leaders from five churches in Kigali conveyed that the evangelical religious movements offer a world view salient with many of its supporters belief systems and experiences of everyday life. There is no doubt of the potential for mobilizing collective action, inherent in the evangelical churches in Kigali. While currently lacking a clear and coherent agenda on its role in the adaptive capacity of the social-ecological system of Kigali, an awareness is awakening. Yet many actions, such as tree planting, infra-structure improvements and education, are taken to improve the biophysical environment. These are based in the movement supporters' holistic worldview, where physical and spiritual health goes hand in hand. With increased understanding within the movements, of complex social-ecological relations possibly through the ambitious projects set up by some of the churches involved, this study shows the movements potential of becoming important actors on environmental issues. This study adds to the growing body of work challenging the assumption that a focus on key individuals is sufficient to explain the human processes within a social-ecological system. The empirical findings serve as good examples of how the intangible processes occurring inside individuals in a system have the potential of inducing far reaching consequences for that system, when amplified through a social movement. Further research, emphasizing on participatory observations could increase this papers contribution to theory development on adaptive capacity.
This work would have been impossible without the support from a number of people. First, a humble thanks to all of the respondents for opening their churches and hearts to me, and for answering even the more challenging questions with honesty. Julius and Andrew, without your extensive network and excellent translation skills data collection would have been a mess. Henrik Ernstsson for being a great support throughout the process despite us being, literally worlds apart. A shout goes out to all my class mates, but especially Emma, Andrew and Emmeline for bouncing ideas and argumentations over the last two years. Finally, for intellectual, spiritual and emotional support my everlasting gratitude goes out to Josephine.
“The reconceptualization came to him so simply that he did not at first realize the scale of his insight. It seemed a thoughtful moment like many others, in the course of a whole internal scientific dialogue. A sense of genius did not descend on him in a cold shock of brilliant light. Instead, as he gnawed the top of a pencil one day, there was a moment of vague verbalized thought in the lines of *or wait a minute maybe you could do it like this…*

*Perdido Street Station*

-*China Miéville-*
Index

1 Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 2
   1.1 Research questions ............................................................................................................................... 6
2 Theoretical framework .................................................................................................................................... 7
   2.1 Linking Social Movements and adaptive capacity .............................................................................. 8
   2.2 Framing theory ......................................................................................................................................... 12
3 Methods ..................................................................................................................................................... 15
   3.1 Sampling .................................................................................................................................................. 15
   3.2 Semi-structured Interview ..................................................................................................................... 16
   3.3 Interpretation ........................................................................................................................................... 17
   3.4 Recordings, transcripts and data handling ............................................................................................... 17
4 Background .................................................................................................................................................. 19
   4.1 Historical context .................................................................................................................................... 19
   4.2 Christianity in Rwanda ......................................................................................................................... 21
   4.3 Religion in Post-Genocidal Rwanda ..................................................................................................... 23
   4.4 Religious social movements and current environmental policies ..................................................... 24
5 Results ....................................................................................................................................................... 26
   5.1 What is considered environmental concerns? ....................................................................................... 26
   5.2 Holism ...................................................................................................................................................... 31
   5.3 The local churches and the Government ............................................................................................... 35
   5.4 The church as an actor ............................................................................................................................. 39
6 Discussion .................................................................................................................................................. 46
7 Conclusions ................................................................................................................................................ 51
8 References ................................................................................................................................................ 53
Appendix 1 – List of respondents .................................................................................................................... 61
Appendix 2 – Interview Guide ......................................................................................................................... 62
1 Introduction

“A good spirit comes from a good body. We believe that a good Christian is that one that has good health spiritually and also have good health in the normal life” (AR)

This research studies African urbanization with the explicit curiosity to see how one of the most influential and most organized social movements in Sub-Saharan Africa, the evangelical church movement, frames two of the greatest challenges of our time – environmental change processes and urbanization. In the last 40 years, the number of evangelical charismatic Christians in Africa has boomed from less than 5% of the total population to over 17% (this is including the highly Muslim northern parts of Africa). This figure stands out dramatically compared to other religious movements in the same region. This rise in evangelical religious movements has already impacted political life in many countries (PEW 2006). The question is how do these churches as organizations and as part of a broader movement based on religious belief, understand issues such as environment and climate change in a context of urbanization? Do or can evangelical religious movements play a role in the adaptive capacity of the societies and urban areas of which they form part? Being part of a church, and be influenced by religious beliefs projected by those churches, is a major part of many African urbanites everyday life and the churches play a potent influence on people’s way of thinking and acting. The initial quote above represents a good example for Rwandan evangelical churches' views of urban environmental concerns. It might seem simplified, almost banal, but at its core is the key to understand the way church leaders in this study talk about and frame the environment in urban areas.

A majority of the world’s population live in cities, and the world’s population fastest growth takes place in cities (OBAID 2007; GRIMM et al. 2008). Urban areas are interlinked with many ecosystems across the globe and they connect the local systems with global systems. In this light it can be argued that the adaptive capacity of cities is extra relevant as the consequences of its capacities are far-reaching. Adaptation and changes in the urban can hold great promise for larger-scale changes making the urban
area a hot spot for any research interested in the resilience of most large scale and human-dominated system (Grimm et al. 2008; Ernstson et al. 2010b). In many places in Sub-Saharan Africa the boundary between rural or semi-wild areas, and suburban or urban areas, is becoming increasingly blurred (SIMON et al. 2004). In this process of expanding urbanization, the social-ecological system change. In face of what some argue is a large-scale, even planetary, ecological crisis in which human-induced processes are undermining a stable climate and other life-supporting biological processes (MEA 2005; Rockström et al. 2009), there are increasing efforts to find ways by which societies can adapt, or even radically transform. This means that to change on a societal level, people must be ready to adapt to a fundamentally new way of living, or adapt to a new set of behavioral and interactional rules (WALKER & SALT 2006:119). Decision makers and researchers alike are struggling with the question of what actors will spearhead this adaptation and what form this will take.

In the urban areas of the global south, civil society has in many places been instituted as a top down process related to demands on democratization tied to foreign aid (MERCER 2002). In this context non-governmental organizations (NGO) take up large space in the political and civil discussion. It is important to stress that that civil society cannot be equated to NGO's, nor is the focus of this study on NGO’s. Furthermore, this study does not equal social movements to NGO's, but views social movements as those instances of collective action and collective organizing that changes belief systems and the organization of society (Melucci 1996). This turns to a view of society as a system of relations that shape dynamics. Actors able to change these relations – economic, social or cultural relations – will also change society, but in order to have a social movement, those individuals/groups that have “similar characteristics over time and space” also need to make sense of what they are doing as emphasized by Melucci (1996: 20). Thus, social movements is both a system of relations – for instance individual churches collaborating on similar projects, or church leaders helping out in other churches, or the church itself and its organization – and a self-awareness of their role as a change agent in society. Political consistency should come from public accountability rather than an organization’s ability to collect funds or gain international support. Thus to understand
change processes within a system it is crucial to understand the social movements that
acts within it (BENDAÑA 2007). Due to the complex nature of human interactions in
decision making in the urban social-ecological system several researchers have taken an
interest in the role that is played by civil society (BOYD 2008; ERNSTSSON et al. 2008;
ERNSTSSON & SÖRLIN 2009; ERNSTSON 2011). The importance of social
movements and civil society in change processes is increasing as the state is being
transformed in the era of globalization. In the process of globalization, non-governmental
actors have gained authority as capable performers working on issues of concern to
people on the local scene, despite the fact that they might operate in authoritarian states
(ERIKSSON 2005: 448). The sociologist Melucci offers a good argument to build this
way of thinking into the current discourse on resilience of social-ecological systems. He
argues that “to study a complex system you must take into account power, regulation,
legitimation, the social needs and orientations that feeds the system.” (MELUCCI 1996:
93). Following the guidance that the field of social movement studies provides, a field
that par excellance have studied large-scale changes, it is possible to identify a gap in the
research on social ecological systems (ERNSTSON 2011). The current discourse on
resilience, struggles with the inclusion of the aspects of power and legitimacy. The hope
of this study is to add to the growing understanding gained from research produced by
amongst others Boyd, Ernstson and Diani on the importance of addressing the role of
social movements and civil society in urban social-ecological systems.

An increasing number of studies of transformation/adaptation of social-ecological
systems can be said to have failed to engage power and the current paradigm within
sociology and other related social sciences seems to have reached a point where religion
is discounted so as to no longer play a major role in modern societies. Since the heydays
of Durkheim and his study of how Catholic and Protestant religion was shaping society,
there has been a waning interest by sociologist of the role of religion in contemporary
society. One of the explanations to this can be found in the fact that all of the “founding
fathers” of sociology (Comte, Durkheim, Marx and Weber) all shared the notion that
advancing modernity leads to the decline in relevance of religion (HERBERT 2003:8).
This view has however been countered by amongst others, David Herbert. He argues that it is exactly due to the contemporary process of globalization (and urbanization) that religion has come to play anew a great role in societal change, and thus that religious movements should be of great concern to scholars if they wish to understand larger-scale change (HERBERT 2003; see also REYCHLER 1997 and KNISS AND BURNS 2004). With increasing globalization and regionalization—seen as intertwined through economic, social, political and cultural processes—the nation state as a source for personal and group identity is weakened, and religion can (once again step in to) increasingly become an important basis for an identity that transcends national borders (see also REYCHLER 1997). This is probably especially true in an a post-colonial and post-revolutionary context as in Africa, where neo-liberal reforms towards free trade has increasingly opened the national economy – willingly or not – towards international processes of primarily economic content, but increasingly also cultural. James Beckford (2003) adds to Herberts argumentations of globalization the similarities between religious movements and other mobilizing movements as:

“their goals are not negotiable, they are not interested in seizing political power, the challenge the separation between the private and the public, they are accused of being deviant, they place a premium on solidarity and they require participation and direct actions from their supporters.” (BECKFORD 2003)

Building on the tradition of social movement study (SNOW et al. 2004) this study holds that civil society has indeed the power to influence the norms of a society, i.e. what is considered as right and wrong, and what is considered as a rational thing to do. This ability of influence hinges upon the organizations that civil society is constituted of, which in turn are built up by often voluntary individuals and groups, which in turn functions as vehicles to mobilize other individuals and socialize them into a certain way of thinking. Furthermore, these organizations work to influence the framing of what should be discussed in society (what are the problems of our society), how these issues should be discussed, and how the problems should be solved. In a system where religious social movements constitute large and growing parts of the mobilized civil society, such
as in the case of cities in the Global South (PEW 2006), these religious movements must be seen as potential and growing actors that influence the norms in that system, subsequently affecting the behavior of the actors within that particular system. This study thus assumes that civil society and its impact on a system cannot be understood without taking into account religious actors, especially in the city of Kigali and similar cities with strong religious organizations. Thus, it is crucial to consider religious social movements in order to understand changes and responses to change within such social-ecological systems. Building on this assumption, this study will use framing theory (SNOW 1986, BENFORD & SNOW 2001) as a basis to explore the potential of influence of evangelical churches in Kigali, and the role that these churches view themselves to have in relation to urbanization and environmental problems.

1.1 Research questions
Viewing the evangelical religious movement and their churches as collective actors within the social-ecological system of Kigali, this study aims to explore the role of these churches. Rather than focusing on individual participants, which would have demanded a more survey-based method with pre-defined categories, the method uses a qualitative interview-based approach to understand how the churches, through interviewing their leaders, have constructed interpretative frames through which reality, and in this case urbanization and the environment, can be made understandable. Based on this, the study will pursue the following research questions:

*How does the evangelical religious movements frame their role and responsibilities within the social-ecological system of Kigali?*

- What is the understanding, within the evangelical religious movements, of the environmental challenges that comes with urbanization?
- What structures does the evangelical religious movements perceive to strengthen or weaken their capacity to act within the social-ecological system of Kigali?
- In a broad sense, what role does the evangelical religious movements have in the adaptive capacity of Kigali as a social-ecological system to manage its reliance?
2 Theoretical framework
To understand how religious social movement actors perceive their role and what
influence they have in the social-ecological system of Kigali one can effectively position
the research in relation to a number of existing theoretical frameworks. For (religious)
social movements and their role in a social system this study leans heavily on the works
of sociologist such as Melucci and Herbert. Adaptive capacity is a theoretical lens applied
to explain “the capacity of people in a social-ecological system to manage resilience”
(WALKER & SALT 2003) and thus becomes the theoretical bridge to link insights from
a social movement perspective to debated issues in the resilience and social-ecological
systems discourse, such as FOLKE(2005) and WALKER & SALT (2003) The aim here
is to bring these theoretical lenses closer together, but also to add empirical support for
the inclusion of a religious movement dimension to the study of social-ecological
systems, especially such systems found in Sub-Saharan Africa where religious
movements play a great part of many people’s lives. The empirical entry point to use
social movement theories will be through the concept of framing as classically developed
by Benford and Snow (2001).
2.1 Linking Social Movements and adaptive capacity

“The concrete workings of a system always reflect its social character as a product of a field of relations. Therefore, the dominant logic of a system cannot be disconnected from behaviour and motives of its actors”.

(MELUCCI 1996: 92)

The above quote summarizes in two sentences the importance of recognizing the role of social movements for the development of a system. The character of a system is the product of relations within the system. These relations are not random but organized and when “a number of individuals/groups with similar characteristics over time and space within a social field of relationship” make sense of what they're doing you have a social movement (MELUCCI 1996: 20). Crucial for describing a social movement is working out what actors want to achieve, how they want to achieve this and what kind of relationship they want with the social and biophysical environment they are in (MELUCCI 1996: 40). This type of description can also be used to analyze how they view themselves, and how they might affect the bigger system.

By defining their existence in relationship to the environment within the system(s) they are part of, social movements are per definition a potential force in the adaptive capacity of that system. The IPCC definition of adaptive capacity is stated as “the characteristics of communities, countries and regions that influence their propensity or ability to adapt” [to environmental change, especially here climate change] (ICC 2001:18). This is a wide concept deriving its meaning primarily from natural sciences. (HOLLING 1986) Despite this heritage, the concept is frequently used within social sciences. Standing on both social and natural science legs creates a conflict in interpretation of the concept. The meaning of adaptive capacity and the focus it has generated in studies varies significantly (SMIT & WANDEL 2006).

From leading scholars within the resilience discourse, adaptive capacity is now defined as being “the capacity of people in a social-ecological system to manage resilience” (WALKER & SALT 2004). On a general level this could be a useful definition as it
allows for quick analysis and conclusions of complex systems, but it requires the
researcher to find ways to work around – or complement – the limitations in current
resilience discourse of how it treats social interaction. The first issue regards the
empirical and analytical focus on “key individuals”, as pointed out by Ernstson (2011;
ERNSTSON et al. 2008). In accounts on “transformative” and large-scale change
processes to “manage” or “increase” the resilience of social-ecological systems, certain
individuals have come to be responsible for an increasing number of social processes (see
especially FOLKE et al. 2005; OLSSON et al. 2004; HAHN et al. 2006; WESTLEY et
al. 2002) — from building and holding “vision for change”, changing “mental models”,
connecting various actors and ceasing “windows of opportunity”. In this study a more
collective view, as expressed by Ernstson et al (2010), is held of managing the resilience
of a social-ecological system which “can be thought of as purposeful collective action
(among state, private, and civil society stakeholders) to either sustain and improve a
certain regime, or to trigger a transition of the system to a more preferable regime; these
are referred to as adaptive capacity and transformative capacity, respectively.”
(ERNSTSON et al 2010).

Social movements were for long regarded as (merely) a reaction to crises or a
malfunction in the system, especially within the Parsonian functionalist tradition. This
view is oversimplified or downright wrong (MELUCCI 1996:23). Instead social
movements combine the affectionate motives of being together while simultaneously
activating and creating meaning out of the joint behavior of the members (MELUCCI
1996:39). Being involved in a movement of this sort requires a definition of the ends,
means and fields of action, but also an active network of relations between actors within
the movement, which emphasizes the collective nature of social movements. A collective
identity requires an emotional investment that subsequently enables the actors to feel part
of a movement (MELUCCI 1996:71). Just existing, will however not create change in
any direction. This requires of the movement to organize and mobilize resources, engage
in the structures that constrain or enable social change, and frame their grievances, goals,
and visions for society (HEYNEN 2006:227). It is important to stress these complexities
when analyzing human behavior. Ignoring social constructions and cultural variables, by
putting the actors within a system in a rational choice vacuum, such as in much of current resilience research on adaptive capacity (e.g. SCHEFFER 2007), risks not answering relevant questions of human adaption. Instead, analyzing actors from a social movement perspective, where opinions, values and beliefs are shaped through interactions facilitates the understanding of the complexities of adaptive capacity in social-ecological systems. Albeit at another scale, Ernstson (2011; ERNSTSON & SÖRLIN 2009) address this in his study of social movement organization around green spaces in Stockholm. He shows that it is possible to study adaptive capacity processes from a social movement perspective by framing the discursive processes in the movement. The contribution of this thesis is an attempt to raise these issues in an Sub-Sahara African context where religious movements are an increasingly dominant form of social movements.

Analytically we can map out the position of a particular social movements on the grid of society by using the three coordinates of what to achieve, how to achieve this and what relationship to have with the social and biophysical environment that the social movement form part. With growing populations, urbanization and changing global environmental conditions, environmental issues become more pressing in urban areas. But, at the heart of environmental issues is no longer the problem of means, instead it is a problem of ends – i.e. the cultural models and ideas that govern our individual and societal behavior in relation to ecological system in which our society form part (MELUCCI 1996:163). The political ecologist Heynen (2006:127) puts it this way: “What differentiates human actants from others is their organic capacity to imagine different possible futures, to act differentially in ways driven and shaped by human drives, desires and imaginations.” Religious social movements address, from the outset, human drives, desires and imagination while organizing large crowds, making them obvious voices for these different possible futures. Thus, it is not only important to consider religious actors for the sake of religion itself, but for their role as a potential force resisting the domination of social life by state and market (HERBERT 2003:61), and for creating novel ways of thinking and action.
Indeed, and as argued by Ernstson et al (2010b: 538), “the answer to increased resilience might not lie in its ecological dimension, but rather in the social” where “innovation [technical and cultural] sits at the heart of understanding resilience and transformative capacity in human-dominated systems”. In relation to this thesis, the evangelical churches and the religious movement they are part of, thus also gives us an analytical entry point to understand by which cultural innovations – forms of organization and forms of thinking – that a city like Kigali, with increasing presence of religious movements, can gain increased adaptive capacity.

Based on this, the ambition of this study is to push how the research community understands adaptive capacity in social-ecological systems. This will be done by showing how adaptive capacity can be linked to the study of social movements, which will help to develop the current theoretical framework of adaptive capacity within the resilience discourse (FOLKE et al. 2005).
2.2 Framing theory

“Analysis cannot simply identify action with that which the actors report about themselves, without taking into account the system of relationships in which goals, values, frames and discourses are produced.”

(Melucci 1996:16)

To be able to dive deeper in understanding the religious social movements in the study, the researcher used the theoretical framework of framing. Goffman (1974:24) is seen as the first proponent of using framing as a way of thinking about human behaviour. He explained that "frames are schemata of interpretation that enable individuals to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences in their life and the world around them."

Gamson (1992:111) took it one step further in an analysis of frames and collective action: "Collective action frames are not merely aggregations of individual attitudes and perceptions but also the outcome of negotiations over shared meanings".

There are two sets of features to frames: Core framing tasks, and discursive processes that work parallel to these tasks. For the sake of clarity and simplicity, only the tasks and processes relevant for this research will be elaborated on.

The core tasks are diagnostic, prognostic or motivational. Diagnostic frames focus on blame and responsibility. It assists the actors in setting the boundaries, delineating between “good” and “evil”. Prognostic frames use the diagnosis to articulate proposed solutions, or at least plans and strategies on what to do. This relation limits the movement’s freedom of action, as their diagnosis of the problem in turn limits their range of “reasonable” solutions. Many movements can share the same diagnosis of the world around them, but propose different ways of handling this world. Thus it is often in the prognostic frames, what the movement wants to do or will do about it, that the differences between movements appear. Finally, a rationale for actors to engage in the collective action is needed. To create and sustain engagement in the issues and activities identified in the two first frames, the movement will need to create an appropriate logic, a way of reasoning that can appeal to reengage those already engaged, and to move the passive on-lookers to become active participants for the first time. This is called a
Frames appeal differently with different groups, there are various levels of frame resonance (BOSTRÖM 2004). This is governed by a number of factors. Firstly, it depends on concrete experiences and cultural narratives in the local context (BOSTRÖM 2004). There are however more dimensions as to why frames resonates with a group. The frame must be perceived as consistent, that is, with congruence between a movement’s beliefs, claims and actions. Also, the frame must be perceived as empirically credible. That is, showing a connection to events in the world. It is however important to note that this connection, or fit, must only be perceived to generate collective action. The frame articulators must also be perceived as credible. This means that how well a frame resonates with a potential supporter is correlated to the perceived status and expertise of the people articulating the frame.

Not only does a frame have to resonate with potential supporters, it must also be perceived as salient. Salience refers to how well it resonates with peoples cultural narratives, how congruent it is with peoples everyday experiences and how essential the beliefs of a frame is for potential supporters (BENFORD & SNOW 2000).

Frames can serve the purpose of clarifying and enforcing an interpretative frame on a particular issue. That is to say, the world is complex and confusing – if a social movement organization delivers a clear answer/path to walk, people will join the cause. This is called frame amplification and primarily takes one of two forms. The first, value amplification is when a social movement identifies, idealizes or elevates a value that is important but has not yet inspired collective action. The second is belief amplification. Here, the social movement tries to strengthen their frames’ relevance by speaking to the emotions of potential supporters. Causality and blame are addressed and the seriousness of the problems emphasized and the probability of change and efficiency stressed. The frame articulators use arguments as “the necessity to stand up for and issue at stake” to amplify the frame (SNOW et al. 1986).
2.2.1 Framing theory and identity formation

In the words of Gamson (1992b), “[p]articipation in social movements frequently involves enlargement of personal identity for participation and offers fulfillment and realization of the self” and one can only assume that, due to their spiritual nature, this is particularly true for religious movements. Framing theory, as described in the section above is in this study used to serve as a theory explaining identity formation in social movements.

Collective action framing processes constitute a central mechanism facilitating the linkage between individual and collective identities. Identity formation is an inherent part and outcome of the framing process. (SNOW & McADAM in BENFORD & SNOW 2000).

By making sense of action, and how events and actors are related spatially and temporally, the frame assists in creating collective and individual identities. But the frame also works at a more concrete level. Identity is shaped in the interactions of frame participants preparing or taking part in activities. Although framing theory is by no means a panacea for explaining identity formation, it serves an invaluable purpose of positioning personal identity in a movement context (BENFORD & SNOW 2000).

To empirically analyze framing will open for an analysis of how churches in Kigali, within the evangelical movement, situate themselves within the broader issues of urbanization and environmental problems. This in turn will open for an analysis of how this might influence the adaptive capacity of the social-ecological system of Kigali.
3 Methods

3.1 Sampling
The churches and respondents that took part in this study were selected through a combination of snowball sampling and strategic or subjective sampling (DENSCOMBE 2000:23, 24 ESAIASSON et al. 2007:110, 213). These sampling techniques were selected and executed based on the principles of Completeness and Similarity/Disimilarity as described by Blee and Taylor (KLANDERMANS & STAGGENBORG 2002:100).

As Rwanda lacks coherent records of religious actors and their membership the researcher had to rely on the expertise of governmental and religious leaders. Through conversations with representatives of the local and national governments as well as the main office of the Pentecostal Church of Rwanda (ADEPR), the largest evangelical denomination with well over one million members (USABWIMANA 2007:13), five congregations (churches) were identified. These churches were suggested by the experts in question for representing the growing charismatic evangelical denominations of Rwanda in different ways. The idea was to cover as wide a spectrum as possible of income class among the members of the different churches. Thus one church was found in the poor, marginalized area of Nyamirambo, two churches in the lower middle class area of Remera. One, despite being placed in the industrial area of Gikondo attracts educated young urbanites. Finally one church was selected in the high income area of Kacikyiro. The assumption of class affinities among church members was confirmed by respondents during the interviews. When the churches had been identified, the head pastor was contacted and approached with the concept of the research. The first interview was always conducted with the head pastor (with one exception where the vice president of the church was the first to be interviewed) after which he was asked to suggest other leaders within the congregation for the researcher to interview. These in turn, after their interviews, suggested other potential respondents, thus snowballing out to more interviews based on the interviewees’ suggestions.
3.2 Semi-structured Interview
The study was executed using a total of 17 semi-structured interviews. This interview method allows the interviewer to lean on an interview guide while allowing further probing on issues that arise during the interview. A semi-structured approach "provide greater breadth and depth of information, the opportunity to discover the respondent's experience and interpretation of reality, and access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher, but at the cost of reduced ability to make systematic comparisons between interview responses." (KLANDERMANS & STAGGENBORG 2002:92).

To minimize this drawback an interview guide, based on my theoretical approach, was created. A guide "increases the comprehensiveness of the data and makes data collection somewhat systematic for each respondent." During the first interviews it became clear that getting the respondents to talk about environmental concerns was not as straightforward a process as just asking them. Rather a revision of the interview guide was necessary, focusing the questions more on the everyday experiences of the respondent. Thus, the guide was adjusted slightly halfway through the interview process as "logical gaps in the data [was] anticipated and closed" (MIKKELSEN 2005:171) to reach theoretical saturation, when the analyst deem that no more information/interviews will change the understanding of the key-topics that was analytically pre-determined or emerged during the interviews. This development emphasizes the strengths of semi-structured interviews as a method for data collection. As opposed to standardized interviews or questionnaires an interview guide allows for the interview to “remain fairly conversational and situational” (MIKKELSEN 2005:171), allowing flexibility and adjustments during data collection.

To use participatory observation methods might have shed more light on the applied aspects of the churches' environmental engagements, as one should “never assume that the meaning of the action coincides with the actors’ verbal representation of it.” (MELUCCI 1996:386). Any further research would thus aim to also include extensive participatory observations.
3.3 Interpretation
Although language was one of the criteria that the respondents, as part of the snowball sampling, were asked to consider when suggesting other relevant respondents, an interpreter was used during a number of interviews. Using an interpreter allows the respondents to elaborate freely in the language they feel most comfortable, while at the same time helping the researcher to avoid “dumbing down” the questions. However there is always the risk of misinterpretation and confusion of terminology. To minimize the risk of this an experienced interpreter was selected. Before conducting the first interview the interpreter was asked to translate key terms and concept, as well as the complete interview guide. Another translator was asked to translate the Kinyarwanda version of the concepts and interview guide back to English to ensure the accuracy of the terminology. Further reading of some interesting research concerning the use of interpretation in interview situations and its effect on the result can be found within nursing research (e.g WALLIN & AHLSTRÖM 2006).

3.4 Recordings, transcripts and data handling
All interviews were recorded and transcribed. In the case of interpreted interviews only the English parts of the interviews have been transcribed. Nonetheless, the researcher spent considerable time with an external interpreter, double checking the recordings to ensure that the translations were correct. Although minor faults were noticed, no significant errors were detected.

As seen above, the data collection was done using a semi-structured interview guide. In addition to this, a description of the data handling ensures transparency and reliability of the study. The data handling process done through meaning condensation, labeling and grouping is an attempt to ensure the validity of the study, i.e. are we really researching what we think we are researching?

After transcription the interview data was processed to increase comprehensibility and
facilitate analysis. Through meaning condensation (KVALE 1997) the interview data was condensed into shorter quotes and excerpts. These were in turn analyzed and clumped together in categories, or labels according to the issues they touched upon or concerns they raised. This resulted in 7 groups. As the data handling progressed it became clear that the theoretical framework of framing (SNOW 1986, BENFORD & SNOW 2000) as presented in the theory chapter above would provide an excellent structure for analyzing the data. The labels for the groups were, with two exceptions, borrowed straight from the previously mentioned articles. The eight categories were: Credibility, Diagnostic, Extension/Amplification, Government relations, Prognostic, Salience and Cosmology. With the condensed data categorized in labels the researcher undertook a second round of analysis. Through this process similarities and overlaps became apparent, resulting in the final structuring of the data in four thematic groups, reflected in the chapters in the results section:

- What is considered environmental concerns?
- The church and the government
- Holism
- The church as an actor
4 Background

Rwanda is a small (26,338km²), land-locked country in Central Africa, neighboring Congo to the west, Burundi to the south, Tanzania to the east and Uganda to the north. It has a population of an estimated 10 million and due to its small size a high population density. The population is primarily rural and the country has only one major urban area, the capital Kigali. According to official figures Kigali has grown from 140,000 inhabitants in 1991 to well over a million today (it passed 1 million in 2006) (KIGALI 2011) making it an extreme example of the ongoing urbanization in the global south. This rapid urban development generates dramatic consequences for the social and biophysical environment, plainly visible in Kigali. “Un-employment, underemployment, inadequate housing and access to public services, traffic congestion and environmental pollution” (HOPE 1996) are but a few consequences of the development in rapidly growing urban areas in Africa. As the urban area grows, water scarcity increases and inhabitants are more exposed to flash floods (DOUGLAS et al. 2008). Lowered food security is another negative consequence of rapid urbanization as farmland is transformed into residential or industrial areas. This is to a certain extent countered by the practice of urban agriculture, but the built environment limits the choice of farming sites and land development initiatives rarely, if ever, facilitates urban farming (DRESCHEL & DONGUS 2010).

4.1 Historical context

Rwanda originates, unlike a most other countries in Africa, from a pre-colonial state sharing much of present-day Rwanda's borders (KAMUKAMA 1997:10). During colonial times, Germany, and after the end of the World War I, Belgium, used existing power structures to maintain control over Rwanda, despite a very small presence in the area (PRUNIER 2002:25). Through this, the colonial powers refined an existing system of nobility (Tutsi) and commoners (Hutu) and strengthened the ethnical dimensions of the old system (KAMUKAMA 1997:21). The colonialists used Tutsi agents to force the Hutu farmers to grow cash crops. This grew resentment among the oppressed, and as a small number of Hutus got more educated and influential resistance grew (KAMUKAMA 1997:26). The decisive change came when the Catholic church switched sides to support
the Hutus in the 1950's (PRUNIER 2002:44). In 1959 the Mouvement Democratique Rwandais/Parti du Mouvement et de l'Emancipation Hutu or MDR-PARMEHUTU was founded by Grégoire Kayibanda (MAMDANI 2001:121). Violent clashes between Hutu and Tutsi became common. When Rwanda was declared independent in 1961 Kyabanda became the nation’s first president. As a response a Tutsi guerilla group tried to invade Rwanda and its failure led to the slaughter of 10 000 Tutsis in Rwanda (KAMUKAMA 1997:32). The anti-Tutsi propaganda continued and massacres occurred regularly. This violence, and threat thereof, forced waves of Tutsis to leave Rwanda for neighboring countries. Despite lower levels of violence under president Habyarimana who grabbed power in 1972, tension grew in the 1970's and 1980's (PRUNIER 2002, SEMAUJANGA 2003).

In 1987 the Ugandan guerilla movement had just succeeded in overthrowing President Obobte. A group of exiled Rwandan Tutsis, part of the military leadership in the Ugandan guerilla created the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) with the explicit purpose of returning the exiles to Rwanda, at any cost (PRUNIER 2002:68). The first attempt took place in 1990. The invasion by RPF, from the north was in itself a failure. It also intensified the anti-tutsi propaganda in Rwanda. Rallies were held and new, radical parties were formed, whose youth-wings were little more than fighting squads (ADLMAN & SUHRKE 1999, MAMDANI 2001). Small massacres occurred regularly. Late 1993, early 1994, tension was reaching uncontrollable levels. When President Habyarimana's plane was shot down April 6th 1994, killing the President and his Burundian counterpart when landing in Kigali, it marked the start of a genocide.

At the end of a gruesome three months of slaughter of maybe as many as 1 million people, RPF controlled all of Rwanda. The war and genocide was over, but much worked remained. Many in the Rwandan diaspora returned, while more recent refugees from neighboring countries did the same. Conflicts over land issues arose and the capital of Kigali started to grow rapidly.

In 2000 Paul Kagame became the president of Rwanda and started a thorough work with creating a modern Rwanda. Among the prioritized issues were environmental policies (KAGAME 2009). A work for which Rwanda has gained some international recognition (e.g nominations for both 2011 Energy Globe Award and the Future Policy Award)
Through public sensitization campaigns and monthly communal work (Umuganda) the government's environmental agenda is spread throughout the country (REMA2009). At the same time the government and RPF is accused of severely limiting freedom of press and expression and threatening and even killing political opponents (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH 2011).

4.2 Christianity in Rwanda
To understand the role of religious social movements in Rwandan society, and the potential it has to generate collective action, it is imperative to understand its century old history.

Christianity in Rwanda dates back to the first colonial activities in the region. Just as in many other African colonies the colonialists worked side by side, sometimes hand in hand with missionaries. The missionaries in Rwanda took one of two radically different approaches to their work. One group of missionaries focused on converting as many Rwandans as possible as quickly as possible. These missionaries worked with the Hutu peasants in the countryside. The other group chose to work with the nobility, the Tutsis, in the belief that if they converted the leadership of the country, they would easily be able to convert the rest of the country (MBANDA 1997:16). As the missionaries felt they were working in a cultural setting that needed to be “civilized” (MBANDA 1997:35) the act of conversion to Christianity represented in colonial times not only a change of faith, but also a conversion to Western values, and in the longer run education and work in a Western style (SEMUJANGA 2003:76). To become “civilized” was to become “Westernized”.

Belgium had high hopes of turning Rwanda into a Christian kingdom of Africa. It was therefore a great disappointment when King Musinga refused to be baptized in 1931. The result was a direct intervention in the succession and Musinga was dethroned and replaced with the more agreeable (and Christian) King Mutara III Rudahigwa, blessed by the Pope. In this instance a symbiotic bond was created between the Catholic Church, the
colonial administration, and the government of Belgium. However, through this act, the catholic church in one instance alienated many Tutsi's (LINDEN 1999:18). In the 1950's the catholic church in Rwanda openly supported the newly started movement for Hutu empowerment, a movement run mostly by a Hutu elite trained in catholic schools. Whether the Catholic church’s move to support the Hutu's sprang from a “socialist motive” to support the poor (predominantly Hutu) peasant class or some other political motive is still argued among scholars (MBANDA 1997:51). A bloody revolt leading to independence followed in the late 1950's, but the church showed no sign of condemning neither acts of violence nor taking any reconciliation initiatives (MBANDA1997:61). Instead, the arch-bishop of the Catholic Church took a seat in the central committee of the ruling party (RITTNER et al. 2004:73)

In this context of strong Catholic hegemony, Protestants were identified as unbelievers. Non-catholic missionaries and churches were however allowed to act within the country. In the 1970's, protestant movement's organized roughly 18 percent of the population, but had no united position in politics (FORGES 1999:44). Despite training in political advocacy from (surprisingly enough) the catholic church, protestants had little influence in society(SEMUJANGA 2003: 91; KALIBWAMI 1991: 551). Some Protestant church leaders cooperated with officials by passing on state announcements from their platforms and by serving in councils, mostly development projects on a local level (FORGES 1999: 44). Although the Protestant Churches' association with the regime did not have the historical depth of the Catholics', their attitude was no different (PRUNIER 2002: 252). Most religious leaders were bought off by the government official’s through favors which caused them to compromise their prophetic roles (MBANDA 1997, 69, 70).

In the years leading up to the genocide of 1994 the church was the second largest employer in Rwanda, after the state. The churches developed all sorts of services around the core activities. Schools, health clinics and printing presses for religious tracts were developed. 90% of the population was registered as Christians, with a clear majority Catholics, and took active part in church life. In this light it is important to recognize the religious movements’ power in calling to (sometimes destructive) collective action. The
genocide between April and July 1994 was a genocide committed by Christians. The churches were multi-ethnic and Christian Hutus murdered Christian Tutsis or moderate Hutus within the same denomination (RITTNER et al. 2004:169; AEGIS 2004:24).

4.3 Religion in Post-Genocidal Rwanda
Rwanda of today is an utterly religious nation. 90% of Rwandans consider religion to be “very important in their lives”, 93% consider themselves Christians, 5% Muslims and only 1% call themselves “religiously unaffiliated” (PEW 2011). Despite the lack of coherent national figures on affiliations in different Christian denominations one trend stands clear; the growth of evangelical charismatic churches. This development is a grassroots sprung social mobilization seen in most parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, many local evangelical churches are being “established in many parts of Africa without the help of ‘foreign missionaries’ at all” and have been for a long time. This development has been “motivated by a compelling need to preach and even more significantly, to experience a new message of the power of the Spirit.”, in the words of missiologist Andersson (2000). The current trend of local African evangelical churches, has been seen as a “response to white cultural domination and power in the church” but that is not enough to explain its constantly increasing popularity. An explanation for the increase in the interest for evangelical churches is rather found in their willingness to address social issues in a locally contextualized manner. Anderson (2000) continues:

“Pentecostals in Africa proclaim a pragmatic gospel that seeks to address practical needs like sickness, poverty, unemployment, loneliness, evil spirits and sorcery. [...] these Pentecostals attain an authentically indigenous character which enables them to offer answers to some of the fundamental questions asked in their own context. A sympathetic approach to local culture and the retention of certain cultural practices are undoubtedly major reasons for their attraction, especially for those millions overwhelmed by urbanization with its transition from a personal rural society to an impersonal urban one.”

The trend is, for a number of reasons, accentuated in Rwanda. The colonial, post-independence political and subsequent genocidal involvement lead to a weakened
position for the Catholic church. In the aftermath of the genocide the catholic church lost ground. ADEPR, the largest evangelical church in Rwanda finds its roots among the Swedish missionaries starting their work in the Ruanda-Urundi area (currently Rwanda-Burundi) in the early 1930's (SÖDERLUND 1995:118). Early on after the genocide of 1994 ADEPR started their reconciliation work with genocide perpetrators in prison, gaining many members (SUNDQVIST 2010). At the same time, refugees from the genocides encountered evangelical, charismatic churches in refugee camps in Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as in Tanzania and other nearby countries. Upon returning to Rwanda, these refugees brought their “new” faith with them. At the same time, diaspora, returning after sometimes decades abroad brought evangelical streams of thought and ideas thus further influencing the denominational map of Rwanda.

Bearing in mind the devastating consequences of the churches' involvement in the genocide, the civil war and national politics leading up these fatal events, there seem to be less official involvement from the churches in political matters of the day.

4.4 Religious social movements and current environmental policies
Despite religious movements being the largest social movements in Rwanda they are not mentioned in the governmental policy document “State of the Environment and Outlook 2009”. Religion is mentioned only in passing as a factor to consider in “social change”. When creating future scenarios for Rwanda’s environment, religion and religious actors are mentioned in only two places. This frequency gives a hint of the very low expectations or concerns the government might have regarding religious actors involvement in environmental issues. In the first scenario a religious revival is described when religious leaders starts emphasizing relations over consumption. This clear flirt with religious leader (i.e involve in environmental issues and you'll see your congregations grow) is interwoven with a desire to see the church as a uniting factor between ethnic groups (REMA 2009:115). In the second case religious actors are mentioned in passing when describing the consequences of increased egocentrism: “People's sense of community and environmental protection narrowed greatly to focus
only on their own survival within their tribes, clubs, zones, churches and neighborhoods.” (REMA 2009:115). Over-all, not only religious movements, but social movements and civil society in general is given little space in the “State of the Environment and Outlook 2009” scenarios.

In legislation the situation is much the same. There is no specific mention of churches, but there are certain obligations directed towards associations, a category the churches fall under. First of all, associations are “required to protect the environment at all possible levels” (ORGANIC 2005: 73). This fact, together with the obligation of “private institutions and individuals” to “sensitize the population on environmental problems and to incorporate environmental educational programs into their activity plan.” (ORGANIC 2005: 83) is crucial to bear in mind when analyzing the relation between the churches and the government.
5 Results
The results chapter consists of four sub-chapters. The first chapter deals with how the social movements define the social-ecological system that they are in and the challenges they face within it. The concept of social-ecological systems is however not a term used by any of the respondents as they use the term environment to describe their everyday experiences. Using the term social-ecological system nonetheless serves a purpose as it helps the researcher, in an attempt to include the voices of religious social movements in the current resilience science discourse on urbanization and adaptive capacity. In this chapter the respondents’ ideological views on environment is also dealt with. The second chapter concerns the movements' relations to the government. The third chapter addresses the holistic world views of the movement and how this relates to their actions. The fourth and final chapter of the results section gives a voice to the movements call to action; who is called and how they are called to action and what challenges they address.

5.1 What is considered environmental concerns?
To understand how evangelical social movements frame their role and responsibilities within the social-ecological system of Kigali the researcher must first identify how these actors define their system and what concerns what they see within it. The respondents views on environment finds its foundation in an holistic world view (explained in greater length below) where the church must be involved in environmental issues since the church is an inseparable part of the environment (NVP).

Based on this notion a number of more specific concerns arise on a local micro-scale, a societal meso-scale and a regional/global macro-scale. Initially, the over-arching concern showing in almost all interviews is the rapid population growth. There is an acute awareness to the challenges that come without growing your resources. Not only physical resources, but more intangible values are mentioned. “There are not enough resources and the speed we are on,” is how one respondent put it meaning that this speed “is faster than where people are at. We are growing socially, economically and intellectually faster than the capability we have.”(C2). This concern for the depletion of social resources is visible in other respondents, or as one poignantly put it: “People being many in one place is not the problem, the problem is how they cohabit.” (NVP). The rapid pace of
development, enhanced by the rural to urban migration, is seen as further lowering the capacity of urban dwellers to adapt to changing circumstances according to the (notably urban) respondents:

The problem in Rwanda is that [the development in] Kigali is so speedy. The others need to re-adapt themselves. To re-adapt themselves so that they can jump on the train. It's not easy for them. They need people to help them, [...] then they can join the others (RP).

This development is also the cause of other problems according to the church leaders. The rapid physical development of the hills on which Kigali is built upon raises concerns regarding soil erosion and related landslide hazards (AE). Waste management is regularly mentioned. Both household wastes (NVP) and sewage are sources of concern. The latter is considered a health hazard but one that has been addressed at least in some of the respondents' neighborhoods:

Now it is no longer so that a neighbors sewage system is connected to a neighbor’s house like it was before. Now they dig big septic tanks where they direct everything related to sewage, and we are also encouraged to clean the sewage system in their area. You no longer hear of victims of diarrhea, children dying of malaria, so the situation in general is quite OK now (NVP2).

5.1.1 Trees
The most frequent answer related to environmental concerns is the destructing of trees and flowers, and the subsequent planting of the same. Trees are consider to be “necessary even in urban areas” and of “great importance to the community.” (NVP). Tree plantation is often the first action mentioned by respondents to counter environmental degradation. By its presence in many levels of everyday life the tree furthermore stands as a representation for the holistic world view the churches possess. The trees have become a symbol for the interconnectedness of the different scales people move in. On a local, micro-scale, the trees are emphasized for providing shade and timber for furniture and firewood (NVW). On a meso-scale, the trees are highlighted for improving the
esthetic values of the city and preventing soil erosion on Kigali’s many hills (AE). Finally, on a macro-scale, the trees represent a long term investment in clean air, secured rainfall and in the long run food security (e.g C3,NVW, AE). There is, among the respondents, a reoccurring worry that deforestation will weaken the rains and cause desertification. This exemplifies an understanding for complex environmental causation, expressed most clearly in cases concerning climate. Whether this understanding is self-generated or initiated by the government is uncertain, however, not only the relation trees is given as example – climate is mentioned by several respondents, but also air pollution:

They [the government] make prohibitions on burning and throwing rubbish anywhere you want, that is very important because there are some gases that are in those things that can come in the air and cause a very bad weather and respiration becomes bad (NVC).

Environmental issues are seen as complex and requiring a certain level of education and understanding outside what the bible teaches:

Think about the environment, think about the social environment. You need education. You can come full with what the bible has, but that is not enough. You are preaching but you deal with the spiritual. You won't understand the current trends, you won't understand politically where the country is going. You won't engage the political establishment. We should be there to advice when the politicians go wrong and correct them (C2).

Lacking this understanding, especially among leaders in the church, can serve as a limiting factor for the churches possibilities to act on developmental issues. This is seen as a problem as many pastors are poorly educated, limiting their abilities to implement the sometimes detailed and advanced action plans the national church organizations have created to address environmental issues. One way of getting around this is involving congregational members with higher education (AR), but this is not always an option. With this attitude some respondents see the churches’ role as being “like a father, like a teacher, like a school. […] Because you know, people need to learn, just studying is the only thing that can change peoples’ life and ways to live (RY).
The lack of education or knowledge around environmental issues sometimes adopts a spiritual language. If a person address environmental concerns in these settings he might, in the words of one respondent, hear comments like: "this man has been made confused, he's no longer in the spirit but he has become a flesh man.". Being of the flesh is the opposite of being spiritual, with a focus on the worldly, running the risk of losing focus on spiritual matters. “But”, the respondent continues “in the church in which there are many people that know very well about [environmental] things you can say it without any problem.” (NVC). Not only formal education is mentioned as important, though this is the most common reference. Some respondents, notably the highest educated respondent, enforced the non-formal learning as being much more important than what is taught and learned in schools (Z2). Also a personal maturity is mentioned as a key aspect for members to develop to a point where they can impact society (RY).

In summary, the churches see themselves as an inseparable part of the environment in Kigali. There is a broad awareness of a wide array of challenges facing the social-ecological system of Kigali. Structural, macro-scale challenges such as climate change and population growth are mentioned side by side with more mundane things such as green spaces, erosion and trees and health. Trees seem to be somewhat central to many of the respondents, both as a symbol for environmental complexity and as a representation of the governments influence over the environmental concerns of the churches. Addressing these complex issues require education and understanding, lacking in many church leaders.
5.1.2 Environmental ideology

As much of the environmental concerns raised by the respondents were relatively similar, so was the ideological arguments to engage in these issues. Most respondents gave the impression of having considered these ideas before, but a few implied that they had not by giving only very vague references to their most important ideological document, the Bible (AP, AV).

Where clear ideological arguments were provided they generally concerned humanity's role as stewards of Earth, and this related to Biblical book of Genesis, creation and garden of Eden (GENESIS 1:1-31). We should turn to God for inspiration on how to take care of the planet, the garden of Eden was an ideal place, thus setting an example for our gardening (C3). For we humans are “like gardener, we are watching, we are watchmen, we are just there, we need to keep it.” (RP and similar: AR, C3). But the question of our responsibilities also surface. What does it imply to be the caretaker of earth, working on a divine mandate? “How do you keep it if you don't take care of it? I would say that those who does not look at environmental issues they are not doing what God has asked us to do.” (Z2). There is also an element of control involved. Not only are we caretakers, we have also been given the task “to control all created living things” (RD). Not all respondents agree with this single biblical argument, but instead give several other theological reasons:

Genesis chapter 1, the responsibility of man to steward the earth, all these Old Testament Sabbath ideas of let the land rest, don't take use of every portion of it, leave the corners and turn it loose to the animals. The New Testament illustrations. I guess this is a little of a conjecture, is the earth going to be restored to Gods intent, if so, we are not sovereign, we don't have the power to do what God would do, yet it would seem if we are to usher in the kingdom we should be about Gods things, which care for his creation (C1).

In summary, albeit differing in interpretation it is clear that there is a willingness among most of the respondents to turn to the Bible to find ideological support for environmental concerns. This support leans heavily on humanity being the care takers of Earth and is based on a mission to watch over the creation, given to humanity by God.
5.2 Holism

“A good spirit comes from a good body. We believe that a good Christian is that one that has good health spiritually and also have good health in the normal life” (AR).

The above quote represents a good vantage point for diving into Rwandan evangelical churches’ views on the frame surrounding urban environmental concerns. It might seem simplified, almost banal, but at its core is the key to understanding the way church leaders in this study talk about environment. Holism, as it’s commonly called in Christianity and refers to the inextricable links between spirit, soul and body (JOHNSON 1999). This holistic approach is expressed by another church leader:

“I don't see the dichotomy between the physical and the spiritual [...] not that I will stake my salvation on it, but it seems that this earth will be restored just as our human bodies are. It is nonsense that we live with sicknesses and potholes as God's intentions. So we usher in the Kingdom [of God].” (C1).

Sickness and potholes here exemplify issues that hinder the restoration of the earth. Solving physical problems, healing people and the planet assists in “ushering in the Kingdom”, just as spiritual salvation should. One bible verse in particular reappears in many of the respondents when dealing with holism; James 1:17, here paraphrased by one of the respondents:

A good church is the church who helps the widows and the orphans separating them from the evils of the world (NVP).

It should in other words, be the vision of the church to have its “focuses on spiritual life and the social life.”(NVP). So, not only is the view of the physical/spiritual link within humans holistic, it is also the churches’ mission to address pressing issues on a larger level in an correspondingly holistic manner. Jesus provides a role model for many of the church leaders in this, in the words of one respondent:
The gospel of Christ is that Jesus fed people, Jesus educated people, then people saw the spiritual. Otherwise he wouldn't have looked at the people and said, you guys are hungry here is something to eat. My interpretation of course will be different but I see as a church we have to look at people in a holistic way. Because we are holistic. God created holistic people, we have both sides (C2).

This holism is often referred to more or less as a panacea. When the church succeeds in teaching and living this holism all will be well. However throughout history they have failed and “the world would have been a much better place, the church would have made a bigger impact.” (C2) had the church succeed in addressing problems holistically.

Up to this point the respondents agree. The divide in opinions arises when trying to explain what to address first, the physical or the spiritual. Those arguing for the spiritual issues to be addressed first reason that the spiritual world is leading the physical one, if you tackle the spiritual world first, it is easier to tackle problems in the physical world (Z2). It is in the opinions of these respondents that the churches' role is to start by preaching the word of God. This will change the spirit of people making them more subjectable to initiatives, improving their physical conditions (RP). In brief, the spiritual forces are stronger, leading the physical world. Learn to ride that horse and you can affect the physical world. Those of the opposite opinion claim that since the spiritual change only affects the individual, it is not enough to address spiritual issues, the structures must be challenged:

You can have the influence but for the structural you need to have the capacity and having spiritual powers in Christian life is not enough to bring about the structural change. You can't pray for God to bring a house to a poor in the church (NVC).

One respondent even goes as far as in claiming that physical issues should be addressed first because a physical improvement, or advancement, provided by the church might inspire people to also advance spiritually (AR). Environmental engagements can in other words, be an argument for recruitment and increased membership base.

Most respondents however bring forth arguments relating to the weakness of mankind.
Resisting temptations and distractions is difficult, listening and learning on an empty stomach or with a raging fever is tricky and staying healthy surrounded by a polluted environment impossible. By minimizing these “distractions” it is easier for people to understand what is preached. Behind the spiritual problems lies a physical problem that needs to be solved for the human to be whole (ZE). Finally, as the act of salvation in Protestantism is seen as leaving your old life and starting a new, some respondents imply that it is also the responsibility of the church to provide the people they are trying to save with an environment and the tools that they need to successfully set off in this new life (RP).

The holistic approach includes an indistinct definition of individual and collective. It also has a indistinct border between spatial scales and the physical and the spiritual. In other words “the whole environment has a role in whatever makes up someone’s body.” (AR). There is in the respondents little or no boarder between environmental cleanliness, household cleanliness and physical cleanliness. Even spiritual cleanliness is often mentioned together with the above. Staying clean, physically and spiritually is interwoven with notions of environmental concerns as well as health and measures of pride and dignity:

We are also teaching them how to be clean, how to be not only clean spiritually but also on their bodies, in their houses, everything. How to have good latrines, how to have good water, how you can put a small system of waste management at home. We can’t ignore environment issues because they are part of our day to day life (Z2).

This distinction (or lack thereof) seems not to be a matter of terminological confusion. The phrases used in the interview guides were selected carefully to distinguish between different kinds of environments. The lack of distinction arose nonetheless.
In summary, the leaders of Rwanda's evangelical churches have a holistic view of the world based on the inextricable links between body, soul and spirit. This link stretches further. By referring to the deeds of Jesus the respondents argue for a church community that not only talks the talk, but is also capable of walking the walk. As the world is a combination of spiritual and physical forces, a conflict arises in deciding what to address first, and here the respondents differ. Either, the church helps people to improve spiritually, thereby encouraging a physical improvement, or they assist in improving the physical well-being of the individual thus improving the probability of that person changing to and staying with a Christian lifestyle.
5.3 The local churches and the Government

In the chapters above the respondents gave voice to what the social movements consider to be environmental challenges within their social-ecological system as well as their ideological reasons for thinking this. In most situations this would serve as a good base to assess the actions of any social movement. However in an authoritarian state such as Rwanda, with strong “political repression and restrictions on freedom of expression and association” (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH 2011:154) one must always consider the government and its relations to the movement in question before jumping to any conclusions on what and how the movements act.

At first glance the church leaders interviewed seem to give a one-sided, unreflected view of their relations to the government. This relationship is often described as a mutual understanding where the churches and government understand each other and work together for the mutual benefit of both:

“The church always works hand in hand with the local authorities where it's located. The local authorities help them in achieving their goals. Whatever they are going to do they go and contact their local government so that they come to know whatever they are going to do. They share their ideas and get advice from them also.” (NVP).

Scratching on the surface however shows that this view is multifaceted and complex. Many respondents advocate an adherence to government policies and a facilitating attitude vis-a-vis government initiatives. The respondents mention that the churches should work hand in hand with the government (NVW), making it easier for them (C2). According to these respondents “a true church” has a responsibility for doing good things (C2), i.e implementing the government policies and programs (NVW). Initiatives and implementations from the government are always mentioned in positive wordings, sometimes to an extreme that would awaken suspicions in any listener:

“Kigali is a green city, and the government does very well in trying to make sure that these things are taken care of, unlike other African cities. They are doing a good, good job. A good, good, good job. Good job. And I believe from what we are seeing
from the outside, from the city being taken care of, very, very, very well, some of the other issues like maybe could be social issues, will be taken care of. I see trees being planted almost all the time, around, green spaces being trimmed like: “Whoo!” serious!” (C3).

Despite there being an almost unanimous willingness to express an adherence to government initiatives the respondents are in no way naïve. The governments motives are identified by many respondents as non-altruistic. The government supports the churches, gives them land deeds and cooperates with them because the government needs the churches (AP). First of all the churches organize large groups of people. Among these people the churches are considered more credible than the government. It is therefore efficient for the government to outsource important, but sensitive initiatives on the churches. One respondent use the example of HIV-testing saying that “when the government calls upon [the people] to do voluntary testing they tend to hesitate, but when the church advocates it, they turn up in big numbers.” (AP).

Secondly, there is among the respondents a keen awareness on how the churches are used as a channel for broadcasting government communiqués (RY, AV). As the attendance to religious services, predominantly Christian churches is so high, the government uses the existing gatherings to “pass important information, maybe during election, maybe during what we call community work” (RD). There is recognition of the government's interest in tapping in to the charismatic churches' existing grassroots network. The government of Rwanda has set up structures reaching down to a local level, even to a neighborhood level, but “the church has got a community which it engages on a daily basis” (ZE). Here it is interesting, but controversial to note the ethnic aspects of the charismatic churches in Rwanda. The Pentecostal churches are for historic and current reasons (see the background section) dominated by the Hutu ethnic group, whereas the government is dominated by Tutsi. The churches might serve as important conduit of information to groups that would otherwise be hard to reach or downright hostile to the government communiqués.
It seems that the government sometimes goes beyond having church leaders reading communiqués, wanting rather to influence the contents of the churches' own information. The government “wants the churches to streamline developmental issues in the preaching so that the community that come to the churches gets to a certain level in their welfare.” (AR).

In summary, there is little denying that the government influences what the churches say, but many of the respondents claim to have a larger freedom of movement when it comes to implementing projects of their own (NVP). If the ambitions of church and government coincide, the respondents claim it is because they both share a common goal and have aligned their visions (NVW). It is important to note that the churches adjust to national polices, not the other way around (AE). That government and church share the same vision does not automatically mean that both parties have a voice in how this vision should develop or be implemented. Here the respondents differ. Where some claim that the churches have little influence over government policies and activities, others are more positive. The government arranges monthly hearings to which the church representatives are invited to come with their feedback on new government initiatives, but also get feedback on their own ideas (NVW, RP, ZE, NVP2). Despite the positive wordings, it is important to question the extent of the actual influence, as not all respondents share the same optimism. Rwanda is a state with a high level of government control, severely limited freedom of expression and association and it is likely that the actual level of governmental critique is higher (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH 2011:154).

Some respondents call for a certain caution when interacting with the government (AV). “There is a limit where we stop” says one of the respondents. “We don’t go into each and everything 100%” (AR). The reason for this skepticism is according to one respondent found in the events leading up to the genocide of 1994:

“In this country, currently the way things are, the government is above religious affiliations, or churches. For that reason, most of the church leaders fear interrupting, or taking part in government decision making. Mostly, the main reason that they fear having an influence on decision making is the past genocide of 1994. Relating to the historical
background of the country, we take an example of the Catholic Church, they have always had problems, difficulties with the government. The most recent king went the way he went and the way he died was all in line with the causes initiated by the missionaries. From that moment the government decided to take the utmost role in decision making.” (C2).

It is important to note that only a few respondents mentioned that church policy has presidency over governmental influences, and then only in the most careful wording. These respondents mean that for them to pass on government information it needs to be in line with the Bibles teaching or else they would not. Not that this has ever been the case (RD). If the future will bring visionary leadership within the church (C2) and God's word was to take presidency over the government, cooperating with the churches on that base, then “the country can become a paradise.”(AV).

In summary, the churches have an intimate relationship with the government. Keenly aware of the grassroots connections found in the religious social movements the government uses the existing structures to spread information and conduct tasks that would raise opposition if conducted by the government. The influencing and information however seems to be flowing in one direction. While gladly spreading environmental policy and information on to the churches, the government, at least in the eyes of the respondents seems reluctant to involve these actors as advisers and in decision making.
5.4 The church as an actor

I think the church tends to wake up slow to the issues that should trouble our conscience, but when it does wake up, particularly if it is a time when the church is a vibrant component in society, it is where they have the change elements. (C1)

Using the lessons learned from the chapter above, how the churches frame the challenges of their social-ecological system, how they deal with the government and how they apply a holistic thinking to their reality, the researcher has in this chapter tried to identify the who’s and how’s of action.

Taking a vantage point in the holistic world views of the respondents it is important to note that this also applies to their expressed reasons for engaging in environmental action. The church is an inseparable part of the environment (NVP) and this notion is getting more and more momentum. There is in the words of one respondent “a big mind shift that will come to change” the way the church begins to “look holistically in terms of developing the mind with education, socially all aspects, environmental” (C2). With this in mind it is important to ask oneself how this can be done. This change, this mind shift, is according to one respondent 50 years into the future due to the history of the country (C2). In Rwanda, it is impossible for the churches to act without dealing with the history of the church as well as the history the country and it is indeed a reoccurring theme in the interviews.

History has seen this, many times the church is, through all sorts of things from slavery hundreds of years ago to how we dealt with apartheid, I think the church tends to wake up slow to the issues that should trouble our conscience, but when it does wake up, particularly if it is a time when the church is a vibrant component in society, it is where they have the change elements. In the issues of environmentalism, I think somehow, that most evangelicals, we quit reading our bibles and started reading the political commentaries. We decided that we don't feel comfortable with a certain political view, so then we neglect to read our Bible, where the Bible seems to be just full of instructions on how to maintain the earth. I think that is shifting (C1).
But if national history lifts a warning finger to the church leaders, history can also serve as an example for the churches of today. The first churches in Asia Minor are lifted as examples on how to interact with the world around you and address peoples’ needs so that “if you give the model of the first church and you bring it over, you tell them how effective it was, maybe we can do the same and learn from them and be more towards the community (C3).

Bearing this in mind, how do the churches go about addressing the environmental issues of today? First of all, through the act of salvation. By being saved, respondents claim that Christians have a positive influence in the physical world. One went as far as saying that this positive, worldly influence is the purpose of their work with saving people (RY). The churches can deliver soft values as a complement to the governments focus on policies, taxes, roads and laws. Changing peoples’ hearts so as to care for their fellow man is transformational, it’s a kind of inspiration that will create vast consequences for the future of the country (C1). This altruism and inspiration that comes with salvation is however not enough. Understanding and acting on complex issues such as environmental concerns require, as we’ve seen in the above chapters, education and a deeper knowledge, things that are often missing in church leaders. However even when education is not a problem addressing holistic environmental and developmental challenges it needs inspiration and convincing (AR). The capacity, and responsibility to inspire people to action is mentioned as a contrast to the sometimes lacking organizational structures of the churches (AV).

This inspiration and the argument for convincing members to engage in environmental issues is found in a common vision. For some churches this is an administrative process spanning over several years, preparing strategic plans and implementing these (AV). Others give the impression of having a much more ad hoc approach to inspiration where the ideas of a congregational member is tested and approved/disproved when they come up (NVC). It is clear that the process of casting and implementing a vision relates to the level of education and awareness among the members. The respondents from churches
with a higher level of education among its members are more positive to the potential of implementing projects (C2), where churches with lower educational levels among its members seem to be more direct and less administrative in its vision casting process (NVC).

In summary, the notion that the church is an inseparable part of the environment is gaining more and more influence. The churches are standing on the brink of a great mind shift. This is however impossible for churches in Rwanda without considering the nations historical heritage as well as church history. The respondents argue that the act of salvation generates a positive influence in the physical world and that the capacity and responsibility to inspire people to change in this way is indeed the most important role for the churches in calling to collective action. The capacity to cast and implement visions is related to the level of education among members and church leaders. Vision casting seems easier in churches with lower educational levels, where the implementation seems facilitated by a membership with higher education.

5.4.1 Collective action

*No one is going to block us, unless we do it ourselves. That is why we are in a revolution.*" (Z2)

One of the key aspects of the churches' importance according to the respondents is its role as a meeting place where norms and values are created and shared. Through the church community regular meetings are held between people from different walks of life. Important information can be spread, ideas can be born and shared, initiatives started and projects initiated, all in a quick and efficient way (NVW, ZE). Not only the existing community and regular meetings are helpful in implementing projects. The large group of people involved in church activities also serves as a ready group for collective action initiatives. One respondent mentions the construction of their new church building saying that “Whenever there is something to do with the environment we all go to that place and join hands and try to do what must be done.” (RY). These collective action initiatives can serve as examples for other organizations, encouraging them to take steps in the same direction as the churches (AP).
Organizing the large groups of people that the Rwandan evangelical churches comes with a certain level of responsibility according to the respondents.

We say that in every developmental program everyone has to be involved, at every level you have to be involved. If there is no involvement, then who is going to do it? We are responsible, the church is responsible for everything that happens in Rwanda (Z2).

However, not all churches agree that sheer numbers is the strength of church. By working with a well-educated, influential elite, rather than large crowds from the working class some of the respondents claim to build a greater potential for a long term impact in society (C1). But why would a church want to get involved with the leadership of the country? Aside from the obvious aspect of gaining influences another side arose in the interviews. The Earth was entrusted to mankind, more specifically the Christians, with a mission to develop and make it better. Thus, the churches should take a lead in the development of Kigali (C2).

The church should, according to the respondents be involved in every aspect of leadership in the country, economical, political, religious and address every problem in the country. Because the church has a strong set of values that are beneficial for the nation. Also, and perhaps most importantly, governments are temporary while the church is permanent (RY, AP). In other words, governments come and go, the church was selected by God to be the permanent caretaker of this world. If the church involves in and influence the leadership, thereby improving the life for people, that is in itself a furthering of Gods kingdom.

Addressing the leadership of the nation without creating controversy in one way or another is a sensitive issue considering the historically strained relation between religious and political powers and the churches have chosen different methods of going about this. In one congregation the leaders were reached through activities run by the church interesting enough to attract relevant people. In this case a prayer ministry:
That work of God is nowhere else in the country apart from this place. It's like a gift that God has given to this particular church. This activity has now been known even to the higher authorities of the country. And there are many pagans that come, even including them from the higher authorities. Police officers, army officers and even higher authorities that I can't mention. It is an activity that has been given a lot of potential. On that Wednesday, when you get here you can feel that there is a social action taking place (AV).

Another church approached the issue from a completely different angle. By using a classic democracy argument they claim that the government is not the ministers or the MP's, instead they consider the people to be the government. Consequently, they can address the issues of the government by addressing the issues of the people (Z2). One of the participating churches had a very outspoken strategy in influencing the leadership of the country by reaching out to the future leaders of Rwanda. This is done through targeting the returning diaspora, more specifically the youth in this group, a group among which they expect to find the future leadership of Rwanda (C1). By reaching them early on, the church hopes to instill in them values and a spiritual grounding that will guide them to better leadership when that time comes (C3). The reason given for this is simple. Youth are plentiful and they will be leading the country as well as the churches soon. They are a tremendous resource and it must not be forgotten to give youth the tools to succeed in this (C2). Other respondents also express similar concerns and ambitions when focusing on youth (A2) but no other church had a similarly encompassing approach.

The churches’ role as a community is not only to rally large crowds, thereby enabling collective action. There is also an insight among respondents regarding the credibility and trust that the church carries and that religious authority can extend to other issues (NVC). This authority and the trust that comes with it is used by the government, but many respondents do not give the impression of being overly concerned with this, as long as the end result is satisfying for the church.
I knew that the government went for the churches because church has a very great influence on people. If church is effective, basically doing its job, there is going to be lots of positive changes happening in the community, and environment is one of them (C3).

To differentiate between the responsibility of the churches and the responsibility of the government respondents tend to lean on arguments relating to scale. The prime tool for churches to produce lasting impact is by changing the individual Christians way of thinking and living. I.e: “If you take someone from wrong action to right action that is a very great influence in society.” (NVC). Another respondent uses the allegory of a think-tank to describe the churches role in guiding its members, counseling them, guiding them for the future (Z2). What this means for the church organization is that they deal with issues that are often below the radar of the government. This includes practical implementation of small scale environmental solutions (tree plantation, waste management etc) (NVP2). The church can do things that the government shouldn't “waste time in doing”. (AV). The government on the other hand is, in the eyes of the respondents, expected to cooperate with the church, but also to address issues of a more structural character. From the data it is, in the opinions of the researcher not clear whether the churches expect to remain with local and small scale environmental initiatives or whether this is due to the churches environmental work being relatively young. What is clear however is that the respondents hope that the things taught in the church will be spread to a larger community as members bring their new found knowledge back to where they live and integrate it in their everyday lives (AV). In the quote below this is exemplified using pollution:

You see, the role the church can play is to call people, also to prevent them from that pollution. In church, [...]there are people from near and far from different place. So if you tell a person about pollution and he will know the trouble of pollution he can go away and say from the church you know they told us like this and this and this, you see? He teaches that to his neighbor so that they can practices. So the role the church can play is to call people to prevent pollution. It is easy to them cause people are from different places and they can remind each other on that (NVC).
In summary, one of the key aspects of the churches’ role in collective action is its role as a meeting place. This refers not only to the diverse groups that meet and the synergies created in that meeting but also that the large group of people involved in church activities also serves as a ready group for collective action initiatives. But the potential to rally and organize the size of groups of people that the Rwandan evangelical churches do comes with a certain level of responsibility according to the respondents. However, not all churches agree that sheer numbers is the strength of church. By working with a well-educated, influential elite, rather than large crowds from the working class some of the respondents claim to build a greater potential for a long term impact in society. It is the opinion of many respondents that the church should be involved in every aspect of leadership in the country. This is because the church has a strong set of values that are beneficial for the nation. Also, and perhaps most importantly, governments are temporary, they come and go, while the church is permanent.

To differentiate between the responsibility of the churches and the responsibility of the government respondents tend to lean on arguments relating to scale. The church organizations deal with issues that are often below the radar of the government such as small scale environmental solutions etc. Things that the government shouldn't “waste time in doing”. The government on the other hand is, expected to cooperate with the churches, but also to address issues of a more structural character.
6 Discussion
It stands without a doubt that the evangelical charismatic churches are an increasingly visible presence in Kigali. They constitute a growing grassroots social movement who see themselves as an inseparable part of the social and biophysical environment of Kigali. The churches seem to be standing on the brink of an internal mind shift where environmental concerns are becoming increasingly important. Respondents address structural, macro-scale challenges in their world such as climate change and population growth side by side with more mundane issues such as green spaces, erosion and trees and health. The leaders of Rwanda's evangelical churches have a holistic view of the world, based on the inextricable links between body, soul and spirit. This way of reasoning seems to be salient with many of the movement supporters’ belief systems and experiences of everyday life. This connection however stretches further. The world is seen as a combination of spiritual and physical forces, raising a conflict when trying to decide what to address first. Either the church helps people to improve spiritually, thereby encouraging a physical improvement, or they assist in improving the physical well-being of the individual thus improving the probability of that person changing to and staying with a Christian (i.e better) lifestyle. The respondents argue that the act of salvation, or receiving God in one’s life, generates a positive influence in the physical world and that the capacity and responsibility to inspire people to change in this way is indeed the most important role for the churches in calling to collective action. For the religious social movements of Kigali this means improving the everyday life quality of the movement supporters. Considering these cultural, collective and spiritual dimensions, it is clear that transformative capacity towards more resilient social-ecological systems as engaged by some leading scholars (for instance FOLKE et al. 2004; FOLKE et al. 2005, OLSSON et al 2007 among others), is falling short. As seen in the results and discussion above (as well as in many of the articles referred to throughout the paper), there are several entry points to argue that cultural, collective and even spiritual desires do play a role in increasing adaptive capacity, and that a focus on key individuals, mental models and windows of opportunity are too narrow of an analytical toolbox to understand societal change in all its’ complexity, and subsequently to better grasp what could be meant with adaptive capacity. This study adds to research that aims to better capture and
analyze the collective and cultural dimensions of transformative change and that claims that a social movements perspective is imperative for understanding adaptive capacity in any system (ERNSTSON 2011, ERNSTSON et al. 2008, ERNSTSON and SÖRLIN 2009; with references to MELUCCI 1996; DIANI 2002). The empirical herein show that this assumption is valid also for religious social movements in an authoritarian Sub-Saharan Africa context, being quite a different case study to previous case studies in this vein of social-ecological studies.

Considering the growing size and importance of the evangelical religious movements in Rwandan, and indeed in most of Sub-Saharan Africa society the framing of environmental issues within the movements become in one way defining for the understanding of these issues within the entire social-ecological system. Although the respondents identify empirically credible concerns for a number of challenges within the social-ecological system of Kigali it is obvious that it is not in the diagnosis the churches’ focus or strength lie. In the framing of a social movement there is a clear connection between the diagnostic and the prognostic frames. If a distinct diagnosis is missing, it is difficult for the movement to define a plan of action, thus limiting movements’ possibilities to engage in the adaptive processes in the social ecological system of Kigali. As it stands today, there is little education on environmental issues within the churches. As a result they become dependent on the government to provide them with a diagnosis, which in turn limits their own autonomy when it comes to initiatives and action.

One of the key aspects of the churches’ role in collective action, and indeed also when discussing adaptive capacity, is its role as a meeting place. This refers not only to the diverse groups that meet and the synergies created in that meeting but also that the large group of people involved in church activities also serves as a ready group for collective action initiatives. But the potential to rally and organize the size of groups of people that the Rwandan evangelical churches do come with a certain level of responsibility according to the respondents.

Keenly aware of the grassroots connections found in the social movements, the government of Rwanda use existing church structures to spread information and conduct
tasks that would raise opposition if conducted by the government. For the churches, this seems to be taken as an ideal situation. By addressing emotional values among the supporters they have found a way to amplify their frames. It does seemingly only work in one way though. While gladly spreading environmental policy and information on to the churches, the government, at least in the eyes of the respondents seems reluctant to involve these actors as advisers and in decision making. While this cooperation with the government is said to be voluntary, it is difficult to determine how voluntarily the churches play a part in this ‘collaboration’ due to the authoritarian dimensions of the Rwandan state. It is however clear that there is a genuine ambition within the social movements to improve the social and biophysical environment of Kigali, and often in line with the government’s wishes, partly since the religious movements have no clear autonomy in their framing of environmental issues.

In light of the discourse on key individuals (see among others HAHN 2006) it is relevant to note that none of the respondents mentioned any particular individuals when discussing initiatives taken or plans for the future, these were communicated as collective initiatives and actions. As the situation is today, the process of casting and implementing a vision relates to the level of education and awareness among members in the different churches. Respondents from churches with a higher level of education among its members are more positive to the potential of implementing projects while churches with lower educational levels among its members seem to be more direct and less administrative in its vision casting process. Based in the existing empirical material it is difficult to draw any conclusion on the pros and cons of the two different approaches. Nonetheless education, formal or non-formal, seems to be central for the movement’s potential for affecting the adaptive capacity of their social-ecological system.

To affect the systems adaptive capacity, or in the words of the respondents, to build a greater potential for a long term impact in society some of the congregations have chosen to work with a well-educated, influential elite, rather than large crowds from (the working class). This can be seen as an attempt from the movements' side to build their own credibility by utilizing actors with already high credibility in the society. This might be the case, but it seems rather to be an attempt to initiate a plan of slow value.
amplification, where the aim is that the next generation of leaders in the country shares the values of the social movement. Whether this strategy has any long term impact for the capacity of Kigali to adapt to changes in its social and biophysical environment remains to be seen, but it is the opinion of many respondents is that the church should be involved in every aspect of leadership in the country. The reason given for this is that the church has a strong set of values that are beneficial for the nation. However addressing issues of national leadership without creating controversy can be sensitive in Rwanda, considering the historically strained relation between religious and political. With this in mind, the respondents seems to consider the governments to be temporary, they come and go, while the church is seen as permanent. This aspect is of central importance for understanding how religious social movements address change processes on a larger scale. There is literally no hurry to implement major changes in society if the movement supporters are convinced that their frames will outlast the current government. From a resilience perspective it is interesting to reflect on the consequences this might have for the adaptive capacity of a system. A conflict arises when the notion of an everlasting movement collides with the supporters' everyday experiences of a rapidly deteriorating biophysical and social environment, as is the case in this study. When this happens, rather than turning to the government (as the current political climate would imply) or catching a window of opportunity (as some resilience scholars would argue), the movement leaders turn to the bible to find ideological support for their environmental concerns. Support for this leans heavily on arguments of humanity being the caretakers of Earth and is based on a mission to watch over the creation, given to humanity by God. This is given as a motivation for collective action in environmental concerns while at the same time creating a consistency between existing believes and a changing environment. The respondents argue for a church community that is congruent and consistent, that not only talks the talk but is also capable of walking the walk.

To differentiate between the responsibility of the churches and the responsibility of the government respondents tend to lean on arguments relating to scale. The religious movements deal with issues that are often below the radar of the government such as small scale environmental solutions etc. Things that the government should not “waste
time in doing”. While the government is expected to cooperate with the churches they are also expected to address issues of a more structural character. The extent of this cooperation is today limited to a one-way communication and sensitization. At the core of this is the respondents’ ambivalent attitude to the government-movement relation. Respondents claim to focus on local issues out of their own interest, while at the same time many voice a wish for a deepened involvement in more structural issues. Whether this is a long term sustainable relation and division of responsibilities remains to see. Removing the more structural dimensions of action to focus on small scale initiatives runs the risk of further limiting the movements’ possibilities to influence the adaptivity of the social ecological system of Kigali. To understand the adaptive capacity of Kigali, and indeed other urban social ecological systems (as we’ve seen shown by amongst others ERNSTSON 2008, 2009, 2010, 2010b and 2011) it is therefore imperative to consider social movements and their relationship with governments, just as it is to understand the relationship between the social dimensions of the system and the ecological. A true insight in this dimension of social ecological system might radically alter the way urban systems are perceived and governed.

One scholar that has looked into urban development in Africa is Gandy (2006) who, when studying the urbanization of Lagos, Nigeria, argues that the modernistic idea of urban planning has failed in a rapidly urbanizing Sub-Sahara African context. Thus, much of the academic and policy-literature available “fail to grasp the paradoxical characteristics of the contemporary African city as a dysfunctional yet dynamic urban form.” (GANDY 2006) If the traditional urban planning approach fails, this move from the Rwandan government, to utilize existing social movements, might be seen as an attempt to keep control over a process that has, in a modernistic sense, moved outside of their control. If this is the case, it remains to see how the growing awareness and agenda within the religious social movements will affect the government's possibility to alter adaptive capacity in the social-ecological system known as Kigali.
7 Conclusions

The evangelical religious movements in the social ecological system of Kigali find themselves in a rapidly changing biophysical and social environment. The city is growing and the movements' supporters identify empirically credible concerns for a number of challenges within this changing system. For the members of Kigali’s evangelical religious movements there are however one more dimension to reality, the spiritual. The church stands in the intersection of spiritual, physical and social and it is in this junction it makes it most significant impact. The respondents argue that the act of salvation, or receiving God in one’s life, generates a positive influence in the physical world and that the capacity and responsibility to inspire people to change in this way is indeed the most important role for the churches in calling to collective action. However what form this positive influence will take, and subsequently what consequences this will have for the adaptive capacity of Kigali, is not up to the churches.

There is no doubt of the potential for mobilizing collective action and having an impact on the adaptive capacity, inherent in the evangelical charismatic churches in Kigali. While currently lacking a clear and coherent agenda on its role for environmental issues in the social-ecological system of Kigali, an awareness is awakening. The churches rely heavily on the strong authoritarian state providing a clear picture of the problem, limiting their own autonomy when it comes to taking action. However, with increased understanding of complex social-ecological relations within the movements, possibly through the ambitious projects set up by some of the churches involved this study, this might change in a few years’ time. At the same time, the respondents argue that the churches, due to their set of values, should be involved in every level of leadership in Rwanda. The government on the other hand seems reluctant to involve the evangelical movement actors as advisers and in decision making. Instead, the government “invite” to a (doubtfully) voluntary one-way cooperation with the churches.

The traditional modernistic urban planning approach seems to be failing in many urban areas in Africa causing negative cascading effects on the systems’ adaptive capacity. In
light of this, this research shows that the evangelical religious movements have the potential to affect the long term adaptive capacity of the biophysical and social aspects of the social-ecological system we know as Kigali. Thus, it is in the interest of the Rwandan government to reconsider its strategy and try to control rampant urbanization processes through non-formal structures and value formation. One way would be to give the evangelical religious movements an ownership over biophysical environment initiatives through increased internal education and encouragement on environmental issues, rather than strengthened top down approaches.

From a theoretical point of view this study adds to the growing body of work challenging the assumption that a focus on key individuals is sufficient to explain human processes within a social-ecological system. Throughout the empirical findings it stands clear that the evangelical religious movements emphasize cultural, collective and spiritual dimensions when framing their reality and calling to action. This serve as a good example of how the intangible processes (in this case the act of salvation) occurring inside individuals in a system have the potential for far reaching consequences for that system, when amplified through a social movement. Future research, emphasizing on participatory observations could further increase this papers contribution to theory development on adaptive capacity.
8 References


Anderson, A. 2000, Evangelism and the growth of pentecostalism in Africa, Centre for Missiology and World Christianity, Birmingham


Boström, M. 2004 *Cognitive Practices and Collective Identities within a Heterogeneous Social Movement: the Swedish environmental movement*, Social Movement Studies, 3(1)


Kamukama D, 1997, Rwandan conflict – Its roots and Regional Implications, Fountain Publishers, Kampala


Kvale, S. (1997 *Den kvalitativa forskningsintervjun*, Studentlitteratur, Lund:


Usabwimana, S. 200 Statistiques de l’année 2007. Association des Eglises de Pentecôte du Rwanda (ADEPR), Kigali


### Appendix 1 – List of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church 1</th>
<th>Church 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AE</td>
<td>AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>AV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church 3</th>
<th>Church 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NVC</td>
<td>NVP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVM</td>
<td>NVW</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Z2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2 – Interview Guide

Interview guide

The interview guide contains varying types of questions whose overall aim is to direct the interviewee in a clear but unobtrusive manner as well as for the interpreter to, without doubt, follow the purpose and structure for the interview. *The Grand Tour Question* is general in its nature and designed to get the conversation started. *Floating Prompt Questions* are questions that interviewers use to continue the conversation. However, important categories that have been identified may not be dealt with spontaneously and therefore *Planned Prompt Questions* are questions that are designed to prompt the person being questioned to consider areas of the topic that do not come readily to mind or speech. *Contrast Prompt Questions* are value based and aim for the respondent to take a position. The prompts included in this guide aim at ensuring that all the interviews have comparable coverage in the further stage of content analysis.

If you were to describe your church to someone new, like me, how would you describe it? *(Grand Tour Question)*

*Planned prompt questions:*
  * What are your relationship with other church structures within Rwanda and abroad?
    * Do you receive some form of support from other church structures, financially or otherwise?

Describe the role your church has to play in your community. *(Floating Prompt Question)*

*Planned prompt questions:*
  * What kind of role is that?

  *Is this a role only you have? Are there other actors with a similar role?*

  * Are there structures/issues making you having a role in the community easier or harder?

  *Is it worth the effort of overcoming the (potential) obstacles in order to increase/strengthen your churches role in the community?*
Can you describe the kind of social work/activities you (as individual and church) are involved in? *(Floating Prompt Question)*

**Planned prompt questions:**

- What is the reason behind these activities? Is this part of your policy or is it for theological reasons etc.

- Would you consider any of these activities related to environmental issues? *Is there anything in your theology that encourages or discourages engagement in environmental issues?*

- Are these social and environmental activities important for you (individual and church)?

- Do you think that there are more things you could/should do in your community? *What is stopping you?*

Describe what you see as the environmental consequences of urbanization? *(Floating Prompt Question)*

**Example Question:**

- Name some environmental issues you see as important for Kigali *(Example Question)*

  Motivate each of them
  *What is the main cause of these issues do you think?*

**Planned prompt questions**

- Where have you learnt the things you know about these matters?

- Would you say that it is important or not for the church to take action to minimize the negative consequences of urbanization? *Do you think that taking action for the urban environment will be more or less important in the future?*

  Who carries the largest responsibility for the current situation?
  Who carries the largest responsibility for the future development of urban areas?