The institutional barriers to the promotion of children's protection through their participation

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Doug Reeler:
'Three-fold theory of social change'

1. Projectable change

2. Emergent change

3. Transformative change

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Reeler, 2007: 13

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A key institutional tension

- Organisations aspire to *transformative* change while operating in the mode of *projectable* change.
- Why?
  - the content & impact of interventions is pre-determined (often under donor influence);
  - many INGOs and UN agencies operate in a culture of 'command & control' (e.g. internal hierarchies & contractor-contractee relationships with 'partners');
  - in many contexts it is too risky to the organization itself to engage in the frank, dialogic process necessary for transformative change;

What does adherence to 'projectable change' mean for children's participation & protection?

1. Children's opportunity to influence protection efforts is minimal;

2. Understanding of 'impact' is similarly not amenable to profound renegotiation;

3. 'Children's participation' becomes a performative ritual rather than an inherent element of change-oriented processes;

4. Children themselves may grow frustrated;