



## মুক্তিযুদ্ধ জাদুঘর

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Exhibition of Art and Imagination

# CHILDREN OF LEEDO PEACE HOME

Inspired by  
Rokeya's 'Sultana's Dream'



LIBERATION WAR MUSEUM  
Bangladesh



The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
certifies the inscription of

"Sultana's Dream" by Rokeya S. Hossain

Liberation War Museum, Dhaka

Bangladesh

on the  
Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific Regional Register

Kailash Kishor  
Chair  
MOWCAP

8 May 2024

Jo Winonaka  
Adviser/Chief of Unit  
Communication & Information  
UNESCO Bangkok

UNESCO Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific (MOWCAP)

"This dreamland offered a totally new and different angle for women to see themselves and the world and to widen their horizon. *Sultana's Dream* and Rokeya have become synonymous with women's liberation in the sub-continent and beyond, including recent films and visual art forms. The nominated documents are significant sources about Rokeya's life, and her great contribution to society and to the education for girls in particular."

*From the recommendation by the Register Sub-Committee of MOWCAP (Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific), May 2024.*

## Notes from the Liberation War Museum

Liberation War Museum has been established in 1996 as a citizen's effort and ever since expanded its work to collect, preserve, present historical documents, facts and memorabilia to the greater society with support from the community.

The bondage between the rich archive of the museum and strong community engagement opened many new vistas of memorialization for the museum. One such endeavor was the 2024 UNESCO Memory of the World inscription in its Asia-Pacific Register of the pioneering feminist sci-fic utopian writing 'Sultana's Dream' by Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain. Liberation War Museum as the nominator of the item to UNESCO committed itself for wider dissemination of the text and its reading. As part of such initiative a bridge has been made by introducing 'Sultana's Dream' to the destitute children of LEEDO Peace Home by young artist Rupakalpa Chowdhury. Her innovative approach to inspire the children to discover artistic skill within themselves and thereby to dream was very impactful. Liberation War Museum is thankful to the dedicated members of LEEDO, directed by Forhad Hossain for facilitating the workshop and to Artist Rupakalpa Chowdhury for her empathetic encounter with unfortunate children by using art to heal, learn and dream.

This small booklet reflects what the children can accomplish when they are provided with proper kind of support and opportunity. Every child deserves the right to shelter, food, cloth, education and affection. Street children deserve that more than anyone. That is the spirit of our liberation war, ensuring emancipation of the nation means no child should be left abandoned on the street and be able to pursue their dream.

**Mofidul Hoque**

*Trustee*

Liberation War Museum

## Overview of LEEDO

The Local Education and Economic Development Organization (LEEDO) is a not-for-profit, voluntary development organization established in 2000 by a group of committed social activists, educators, and human rights defenders. LEEDO was born from the urgent need to protect the thousands of children forced to survive on the streets of Bangladesh. These children—abandoned, orphaned, or displaced—face extreme poverty, violence, exploitation, and abuse with little hope for the future.

LEEDO has been at the frontline of the fight to make Bangladesh free from street children. We follow a Rescue → Rehabilitate → Reintegration model: rescuing children directly from the streets, supporting their healing and development, and ultimately reuniting them with families or placing them in safe, long-term homes.

### Key initiatives include:

Transitional Shelters (SETU Bandhan and Mirpur Crisis Shelter): Safe spaces for immediate protection, counseling, and emergency care.

Education for Street Children: Five Schools Under the Sky a Mobile School that reaches children wherever they are; and four Shopner Pathshala schools.

Permanent Care through PEACE HOME: A residential home where 55 orphaned and highly vulnerable children, including 17 children with special needs, receive full care—food, education, healthcare, clothing, and emotional support—until they can be mainstreamed into society.

As an artist, Rupkalpa has contributed greatly to the mental and emotional growth of the children at Peace Home. Her art workshop was truly innovative, inspiring the children to explore life, learn deeply, and understand how to apply this knowledge in their own journeys. We, as an organization, are deeply grateful for her heartfelt support in helping these vulnerable children find their place in society.

### Forhad Hossain

*Director*

Local Education and Economic Development Organization

## Curator's Note

*Dreaming Futures: A Creative Engagement Project with Children  
Inspired by Rokeya's Sultana's Dream*

This project began with a dream—a dream where every child has the freedom to think, imagine, and express without any bondage. Inspired by Rokeya's revolutionary story 'Sultana's Dream', this workshop series was curated to explore the transformative power of creative education through storytelling, self-reflection, and hands-on making.

With support from the Liberation War Museum, workshops were held with 20 children from LEEDO Peace Home, Dhaka. After reading and discussing 'Sultana's Dream' together, we then started the workshops and in the final session we co-created small texts where the children imagined better, sustainable futures. There were three different workshops:

Wire Workshop – where they used their imagination and problem-solving skills to make both 2D and 3D forms from wire.

Clay Workshop – where they sculpted their dreams of who they wish to become in the future.

Paper Collage Workshop – where they created self-portraits as a way to explore self-identity.

My intent as the curator was to nurture imagination, emotional intelligence, and confidence through a process that honors every child's voice. Like Rokeya, who believed that education is the greatest tool for empowerment, we believe that art—when made accessible and joyful—can be a powerful form of education, especially for children who rarely get such a platform.

Every child deserves a space where they are seen, heard, and guided to become the best version of themselves. This project is a small step in that direction.

### Rupkalpa Chowdhury

*Curator*



*Children working with wires*



## My Experience in Working with the Children of LEEDO Peace Home

*Rupakalpa Chowdhury*

This project first took shape in my mind when I attended a seminar at the Liberation War Museum where Professor Lindsey K. Horner from the University of Edinburgh spoke about Rokeya's Sultana's Dream. I shared this idea with Mofidul Hoque Trustee, whose encouragement gave it wings. He saw its potential and graciously connected me with LEEDO Peace Home. That's where this beautiful journey truly began.

In the very first session, I started with storytelling—sitting with the children and narrating Rokeya's Sultana's Dream in my own words. We introduced ourselves to each other, exchanged snippets of our lives, and spoke about the themes of the story—freedom, dreams, and possibilities. This first exchange created an atmosphere of warmth and trust, laying the foundation for the workshops that followed.

From the second day, we began the wire sculpture workshop. Each workshop unfolded over two days, culminating in a final session



where we developed short texts inspired by Sultana's Dream, interlacing language and imagery into a single creative expression. The choice of wire was intentional— it demands patience, spatial thinking, and a willingness to see potential in the simplest of materials. Most of the children had never touched wire for creative work before, yet they embraced it with enthusiasm, bending and twisting it into flowers, human figures, fish, sunglasses and imagined objects. At first, they were hesitant, unsure of what the wire could become. But once they discovered they could shape it into animals, objects, and abstract forms, something shifted— new possibilities opened before them. Their hesitation gave way to excitement, and they began to participate with greater focus, enthusiasm, and freedom.



*Joy of Creation*



*Children at work*



*Creating Terracotta Reliefs*



Next came the clay workshop, where I introduced terracotta relief techniques. The theme was personal dreams and future goals, but what they produced went far beyond my prompts. They began by working on the assignment I had given—creating terracotta reliefs—but soon expanded their ideas into small three-dimensional forms: tiny houses, birds, flowers, and scenes from their surroundings. They were not just following instructions; they were playing, experimenting, and creating purely for joy. Many of them kept their clay pieces, and knowing that they chose to hold onto these works tells me that a seed of creative confidence was truly planted.



*Children working on their paper portraits*



By the time we reached the paper portrait workshop, our bond had deepened. The children crafted vibrant self-portraits—layering paper with buttons, stones, paper flowers, and other found materials. Each portrait radiated personality and creativity. Alongside this, we reflected on the ideas within Sultana’s Dream—freedom, equality, and imagining an alternative future. The children’s responses were both innocent and deeply perceptive, proving that when given the space and respect to think freely, they can engage with profound concepts.

What continues to stay with me is how much these children achieved in such a short time, simply because they were given a safe, respectful, and creative environment. If children living on the streets across Bangladesh had consistent access to both education and artistic opportunities, our society could flourish—not only economically, but also emotionally, intellectually, and culturally.