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Community radio is another means of providing information to the Rohingya community. Joya Pul Happy (left) and Shanta Pul present programmes on Radio Naf which receives support from UNICEF and other partners.

The model mothers and youth volunteers, along with 800 community mobilization volunteers recruited by another UNICEF partner, BRAC, are among the more effective means of reaching the refugees with culturally sensitive and accurate information, helping them cope with the fast-changing context of life in the camps.

Because they are from the Rohingya community, they surmount a major language issue (especially as the Rohingyas' own language has no written form, and literacy rates, in any case, are low).

In addition, adolescent radio listener groups give young Rohingya refugees an opportunity to engage on issues affecting them, their families and wider communities.

"Rumours spread like wildfire, and can have a serious impact on our programmes, and on immunization especially," says UNICEF Communication for Development Specialist, Aarunima Bhatnagar. "Besides the volunteers, we engage local imams and community leaders (known as Majhis). We have also set up a network of 12 information and feedback centres around the camps to ensure consistent messages are disseminated, and to encourage community participation."

Model mothers help refugees cope with the fast-changing context of life in the camps.

In a conservative society, messages on some issues -- such as early marriage -- are not always readily received. Many families tend to take the view that under Islamic law, it is acceptable for girls from age 13 upwards to get married even though this is officially prohibited by the Government of Bangladesh.

Nur Begum is undeterred. "One of the biggest problems I face is that of parents who want their children to marry when they're too young -- in some cases aged only 13 or 14," she says. "I tell them they must be aged 18 or over and there can be no exceptions."