



“Give Us the Nations!” (Ps. 2:8)
THE ROYAL RANGERS PARTNERSHIP PLAN

By Douglas Marsh

Shortly after Johnnie Barnes founded Royal Rangers in 1962, he himself began spreading it beyond our borders. His first overseas trip came two years later when he traveled to introduce the ministry in Lima, Peru, with missionary pilot, George Davis.

This year, after celebrating our 40th anniversary, boys in 65 nations participate in Royal Rangers. But did you know the Assemblies of God ministers in 187 countries? That means we have growth opportunities ahead.

Our mission is to strengthen and expand Royal Rangers all around the world. To succeed, we have developed the “Royal Rangers Partnership Plan.” The Assemblies of God in each nation is autonomous. Therefore, we must respectfully approach its leadership and offer to partner with them, so that together we can “reach, teach, and keep boys for Jesus Christ.”

Here are some of the details in the Royal Rangers International (RRI) Partnership Plan:

➤ **THE PLAYERS**

[The Overseas Players](#)

The world is a big place. How can we strengthen and expand Royal Rangers everywhere unless we have key positions held by top-notch leaders?

The Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM) has divided the map into five regions. (See illustration.) We intend to appoint a leader, or ask National Commanders in the various regions to elect their RRI Regional Coordinators. More often than not, these men will be missionaries or nationals living in their respective regions. Each Regional Coordinator will form a committee to advance the ministry objectives in that part of the world.

Each of these overseas Regional Coordinators will be a member of the RRI Council. The Council will be led by a three-person Executive Committee— Lamar Headley, AGWM Director of Special Ministries (USA); Richard Mariott, National Commander (USA); and Doug Marsh, Director of Royal Rangers International.

The U.S. Players

In order for the overseas players to be successful, the U.S. players must offer strong support. The recently adopted revisions to the National Royal Rangers Council Constitution & Bylaws make provision for a National Missions Committee. Each of the eight U.S. regions will be represented on this committee, and these men will provide leadership to the District Royal Rangers Missions Coordinators within their area.

The primary responsibilities of these men will be: 1) Communicating with commanders and boys to create missions awareness. 2) Generating funds to support missionaries and approved projects. 3) Mobilizing qualified Rangers for ministry promotions, training and service. (More on this later.)

➤ **THE PRINCIPLES**

Just as a construction foreman will follow sound architectural principles to build a sturdy home, so we too must follow sound missiological principles to build a strong Royal Rangers ministry around the world.

The Partnership Principle

Partners are trusting co-equals who choose to share complementary strengths and resources to achieve mutual goals. This principle speaks to our attitudes toward and our relationships with Royal Rangers overseas.

As we seek to strengthen and expand this ministry around the world, we should display correct attitudes. We should not express superiority over our overseas counterparts, and under no circumstances should we ever doubt their ability. But rather, as partners bound by love for God, for each other, and for the lost, we should offer our experience and resources so that our mutual goal of reaching, teaching and keeping boys for Jesus Christ is achieved.

Partnership not only speaks to our attitudes, but also to our relationships. In business you would never establish a partnership until you had defined your expectations and roles. The same is true in missions. For that reason we are engaged in a process of dialogue with World Missions directors, missionaries, and national leaders to define the nature of our relationship. This process will culminate in the release of two documents tentatively entitled, “Operational Guidelines for Royal Rangers International,” and “Cooperative Values and Practices.”

By having the right attitudes and by establishing trusting relationships, we will be able to partner with Assemblies of God organizations, and approved fraternal organizations, around the world to achieve our common goals.

The Indigenous Church Principle

An indigenous organization is one that “stands on its own two feet.” This principle comes straight from the pages of Scripture. The apostles themselves established churches after this pattern. The New Testament teaches that an indigenous ministry has three characteristics: 1) It reproduces itself, 2) it governs itself, and 3) it supports itself. The Assemblies of God in each nation, and the fraternal Pentecostal organizations we partner with, are successfully being established according to this principle.

This principle teaches us what a healthy Royal Rangers ministry in any given country will look like as it matures: 1) Royal Rangers will have sufficient vitality to extend itself within its boundaries by its own efforts. 2) Royal Rangers will be led by qualified men who will train other men and boys to direct the ministry. 3) Royal Rangers will not depend on foreign money in order to meet the expenses of its work.

As Royal Rangers we must learn how to apply the indigenous principle to achieve this level of strength. While the lessons we must learn are many, they can all be summarized by this simple rule of thumb: “Cultivate and never undermine the national leaderships sense of responsibility for the ministry’s well-being.” To live by these rules, here are three general guidelines we will observe:

- 1) We will offer our partnership to nations when we are prepared to finish what we start. However, we will not walk at a faster pace than the national Assemblies of God church or fraternal organization, nor will we walk ahead of it.
- 2) We will enter into partnership with nations when both parties (RRI and the national Assemblies of God church or fraternal organization) are equally committed to bringing Royal Rangers to the level of maturity defined by the indigenous church principle.
- 3) We may assist nations financially in a limited fashion in their early years of development as we partner with them. Funds will be given prudently and with the expectation of accountability. To do otherwise would undermine the healthy establishment of the ministry.

This speaks to our transitory role in the partnership. The nature of our relationship will evolve. The national leadership will move from *dependence* upon our expertise in the beginning to *independence* as their level of experience grows. However, to walk away from a partnership with a nation before this level of health is achieved would destabilize the very foundation of the ministry. And to engage in activity that would compromise that health would be equally wrong.

The Networking Principle

This principle speaks to the importance of linking arms with ministries of the church where we share similar purposes, so that together we can be more effective for the Kingdom. In keeping with the missions statement of the Assemblies of God World

Missions, we will seek to network with ministries in regard to: 1) Reaching the lost, 2) planting-establishing churches, 3) training leaders, and 4) touching the hurting. Royal Rangers International (RRI) has and will continue to establish cooperative relationships, so that we can play a unique and vital role in each of these areas. By so doing, many more boys will come to know Christ as Savior.

RRI itself represents a cooperative relationship between the national Royal Rangers office and the Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM). Both parties have a passion to reach the lost. By linking arms, World Missions is able to open many doors for us to strengthen or establish Royal Rangers all around the world. As we work in step with AGWM, which has been mandated by the General Council to direct overseas missions efforts, we gain all the benefits of their oversight, trust and respect.

RRI also represents an effort to establish a cooperative network among the nations with a healthy Royal Rangers ministry. The Lord's command to "go into all the world" was not issued to the U.S. only. We applaud the missionary fervor among Rangers of other nations. As the RRI network grows, we will seek to focus our collective efforts in order to work according to the principles outlined in this document (and others) and to avoid overlapping our efforts. In this way, we will be more effective in advancing our common objective of reaching, teaching and keeping boys for Jesus Christ.

Royal Rangers USA has also established a strategic relationship with Light-for-the-Lost (LFTL) and Boys and Girls Missionary Crusade (BGMC). This relationship creates greater missions understanding among our boys, and it allows us to participate in raising funds for these ministries, so that together we are more effective in reaching the lost.

Pathfinders represents another cooperative relationship between Royal Rangers and MAPS Construction, which provides use opportunities to erect buildings in remote locations. Convoy of Hope, Healthcare Ministries, and Teen Challenge International are other ministries we may be able to network with in the future so that Royal Rangers can help in humanitarian and rehabilitation efforts. The unique skills and training of Royal Rangers leaders are very useful to these ministries.

This is a snapshot of the networks Royal Rangers has currently established. In the future, we will undoubtedly define others so that we, and our partners, can be more effective in the Kingdom.

➤ **THE POLICIES**

The purpose for including a section on policies, besides spotlighting a few of them, is to underline the respect and trust we earn as a ministry when we observe them. "Rogue Rangers," or "cowboys" break down unity and productivity, since, by their very nature, they "do their own thing." The attitudes of "let's march to our own drum beat," or "let's act now, and beg forgiveness later," will hurt our efforts to strengthen and expand Royal Rangers all around the world.

The General Council, in its Constitution and Bylaws, has “committed all the world missions interests of the Fellowship,” to the Assemblies of God World Missions. Thus, as U.S. Royal Rangers we are expected to channel our overseas efforts through them and to live up to their expectations with regard to policies, procedures and missionary principles. As we do this, World Missions leaders and national church leaders around the world will view us with greater respect and trust as they see us doing things in an orderly and professional manner.

Here are a few policies Royal Rangers should be aware of:

- 1) *Travel approval*: No Ranger should ever travel overseas in ministry without first receiving clearance from the national Royal Rangers office and World Missions. You must complete a simple form, which can be requested from Doug Marsh and returned to him when completed. Once the form is approved in the Royal Rangers office, it will be forwarded to the Director of Special Ministries at AGWM, at which time the applicant will be contacted regarding the required insurance and waiver forms. As a courtesy, allow at least three or more weeks for the forms to be processed.
- 2) *Age requirements for overseas travel*: (The following comments are not intended to provide a comprehensive look at this policy, and, depending on when you read this, may no longer be current. For a complete, up-to-date explanation of the policy and the logic behind it, contact the office of Special Ministries at AGWM.) Typically, overseas trips are for adults over the age of 18. However, 16 and 17-year-olds may travel unaccompanied by their parents as long as the parents sign a “Parental Consent Form” (which may be requested from Special Ministries). Fourteen and 15-year-olds are only permitted to travel overseas when accompanied by their parents, who must sign a “Parental Consent Form.” Teenagers under 14 should not plan to travel in overseas ministry; under no circumstances may someone under the age of 14 be allowed on a construction site. Some ministry trips, like Pathfinders for instance, may completely prohibit minors due to work conditions or other considerations. Everyone from the U.S. traveling overseas, regardless of age, must sign the required waiver forms and must be properly insured.
- 3) *Finances*: Missions offerings should be sent directly to the agency they are intended for, and not to the national Royal Rangers office or to individuals. Support for missionaries, for approved projects, and for Royal Rangers International should be sent to the Assemblies of God World Missions with the proper account or project number clearly marked. Offerings for Light-for-the-Lost and Boys and Girls Missionary Crusade should be sent to those agencies. (For example: *Name*, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802; Account &/or Project #_____.)

Living up to these, and other expectations, will in fact help us reach boys for Jesus Christ.

➤ THE PRIORITIES

As we approach potential partners, either to strengthen the ministry or to start it, experience has taught us that we must focus our combined efforts on four strategic priorities. By doing so, the national Royal Rangers leadership in each nation will be empowered to succeed as long as they expend the initiative to make it happen. Here are the priorities:

Promotions

The promotional efforts are usually directed to national church leaders, pastors, potential outpost leaders, parents and boys. The more they understand Royal Rangers, its methods, its values and its goals, the better they will like it, and the more likely they will be to implement or to participate in the ministry. Good promotions will create an environment in which the ministry can thrive. Royal Rangers International (RRI) is prepared to offer materials and helps to promote the ministry.

Curriculum

Without a written curriculum to guide the leaders and boys, and without the corresponding awards and materials necessary, the Royal Rangers ministry will always flounder. RRI stands ready to assist nations in this regard. We are preparing a “starter curriculum” for countries introducing the ministry, and we are prepared to offer assistance to those wishing to strengthen an already existing curriculum, where needed.

Training

Leaders will never perform beyond their level of training. For this reason, it is very important to establish training standards and guidelines early on. RRI is preparing these guidelines and helps.

Ranger camps

Annual Rangers camps are very important in the development and health of the national ministry. RRI is prepared to provide orientation and ideas to national leaders as they plan and conduct such events.

➤ THE PROJECTS

“I love it when a plan comes together.” Haven’t you said that before? The projects we tackle will do just that—make our Partnership Plan “come together.” The following projects are like the gasoline and oil that enables your car engine to run. All the previous points we have discussed in the Partnership Plan are academic unless there is broad support from Rangers all across the U.S., and around the world, to participate in the following projects. These projects will propel the plan.

All the projects we will tackle can be broadly categorized in three areas:

Awareness projects

For the purposes of this article, awareness projects are those designed to inform commanders and boys of the needs on the foreign field and to report on what is being accomplished. It is education and communication, and those primarily responsible for it are the District and Regional Missions Coordinators.

A personal prayer of mine is, “God, through our combined efforts, raise up a generation of Royal Rangers missionaries from every nation to span the globe.” For that to be accomplished, communication and education must occur. I’ve yet to read the biography of a missionary who responded to God’s call who had not first learned of a need that gripped his or her heart. If we are to succeed at involving men and boys in the Great Commission, we must succeed at communicating the needs of the world.

But our communication must not be limited to discussions among Rangers. We must also talk with the Master Ranger himself. Missions and prayer are inseparable. Missionary work is not “Christian tourism.” Rather, it is God’s mission for restoring the relationship between man and himself that was broken by sin. It is God’s mission, not ours. We are just instruments. If we want God’s mission to be successful, we must use his methods, and prayer is chief among them. Being men, we prefer action. But too often our actions produce few results because we pray too little. If we are sincere about seeing boys everywhere come to the feet of Jesus, we must be serious about praying.

Think with me. If we educate our young men about the Great Commission, and we involve them weekly in praying that boys everywhere dedicate their lives to Jesus, what could God do through us? If Royal Rangers all across America ask for the nations, God will give them to us.

Partnership Projects

Partnership projects are those in which we involve outposts, churches, businesses and other ministries in giving financially so that boys around the world can learn about Jesus. There are three primary ways in which you can give to missions to strengthen and expand Royal Rangers all around the world.

The highest priority in missions giving will always be to stand with those who leave their homeland and take the gospel overseas—the regular monthly support of our missionaries. While committing to projects is very important, the support of men willing to relocate their families in a strange land, to learn their language and customs all with the purpose of sharing the gospel, is by far the highest priority. Our challenge to outposts is to pledge a monthly amount, through their church, for the support of an approved Royal Rangers missionary, preferably one from their own district. Not one outpost in America should go without supporting a missionary for at least \$10 a month.

There is another way to financially support our cause around the world. Royal Rangers has linked arms with Light-for-the-Lost (LFTL) and Boys and Girls Missionary Crusade (BGMC). We are partnering with them to reach the lost through our missions giving. Adventure and Expedition Rangers give to LFTL, while Ranger Kids and Discovery Rangers give to BGMC. These relationships are a win-win situation for Royal Rangers. While our boys learn to sacrifice for missions, we are helping these ministries reach their objectives. In turn, these ministries will help us reach ours. Both of these ministries have already given generously back to Royal Rangers to advance our cause around the world in places like Latin America, Africa and Asia Pacific.

Yet another important way to support missions around the world is to give to the “Royal Rangers International Project Partnership” account. (More details will be available by March 2004 Council.)

Mobilization Projects

These projects are those that must be accomplished by qualified men and/or older boys willing to travel overseas at their own expense. Volunteers who travel overseas on behalf of the ministry play an important support role to our missionaries and to national leaders. The purpose of these missions may vary. Some might go to promote the ministry, to train leaders, or to serve in other capacities, like construction projects or providing assistance after a natural and/or humanitarian disaster. The duration may also vary from a few days, to weeks, months or years, depending on the circumstances.

The cry of our hearts is that God would “give us the nations.” We want to reach, teach, and keep boys for Jesus Christ all around the world. The Royal Rangers International Partnership Plan is a road map to empower leaders all around the world to achieve this goal.

Today, after celebrating our 40th anniversary, there is a Royal Rangers presence in 65 nations. In many of these countries, the ministry is still very new, and in need of support in order to gain strength. Others, however, are strong and healthy, and have a missionary heart.

During the last four decades, only a couple of the overseas regions benefited from a coordinated leadership effort to strengthen and expand this ministry. The Royal Rangers Partnership Plan will bring this kind of support to nations all around the world.

God said if we would just ask, he would “give us the nations!” (Ps. 2:8). Image what we will look like on our 50th anniversary! 🌟