



## 'Life is messy, and so is ministry'

**D**ear Friends and Partners,

This month, I am sharing some of the struggles going on behind the scenes so you will know how to specifically pray for me, the folks in our programs and Julie's Heart Cry ministry as a whole.

You may have noticed that I have been missing in action – especially on social media – since my return from the Central African Republic (CAR) in March. Honestly, I shut down many things in my life, except ministry work, for some much-needed spiritual audit.

### **Time to assess program**

The journey with Brigitte – the young lady I accompanied to Kenya for treatment of her seizures – was



more than I thought I could handle.

But God proved Himself, once again, through His kindness and faithfulness to me.

The three weeks in the CAR gave me the opportunity to recognize things that needed to be corrected in our

*(over)*



Youth at Risk program. This involved removing three students from the program due to their disrespect, anger, violent behavior and other harmful tendencies.

I realized our ministry is not equipped to handle the level of trauma and/or PTSD these children have seen and experienced during the ongoing violence and unrest in the country. Although they have escaped the war geographically, the effects are taking a significant toll on them emotionally, physically and spiritually.

### **Learning curves and decisions**

The situation escalated to the point that the director and nanny of the program were scared to go to work because they feared for their lives and safety.

When we removed these three boys from the program, it meant we needed to find them housing and get them situated – a massive and unexpected expense – since war had displaced them from their

homes hundreds of miles away.

In the words of Cyrus: **Life is messy, and so is ministry.**

This year has involved a lot of learning curves and decisions that have led to regrets; yet, I thank the Lord for Romans 8:28: *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.*

One of the many lessons I've learned through this ministry is ... My response and attitude toward ungratefulness or disrespect say more about me than the person who is offensive.

I'll be sharing more challenges as time goes by. But for now, I wanted you to know why I had to unplug to pray and process. However, I will post again soon!

You are loved and appreciated.

In Christ,

*Julie*