

# What Happens When There Is No Government?

Insights from Canaan, Haiti

# Insecurity and Crime

- ▶ **Rise of gangs:** Gangs infiltrate neighborhoods, extorting residents and committing violent crimes.
- ▶ **Shootouts and violence:** Frequent clashes leave residents living in fear.
- ▶ **Absence of law enforcement:** No police or judicial systems to protect residents or resolve disputes.
- ▶ **Impunity:** Criminals operate freely, with no accountability or justice for victims.

# Exploitation by Opportunistic Leaders

- ▶ **Self-appointed authority:** Figures like Rony Colin position themselves as leaders without formal recognition.
- ▶ **Taxes without benefits:** Leaders impose taxes but fail to deliver promised services.
- ▶ **Corruption:** Mismanagement of resources and bribery plague governance efforts.
- ▶ **Conflict of interests:** Leaders prioritize personal gain over community welfare.

# Economic Instability

- ▶ **Unregulated markets:** Lack of regulation leads to exploitation and monopolies.
- ▶ **Collapse of currency systems:** Barter economies emerge due to lack of trust in formal systems.
- ▶ **Business struggles:** Insecurity and lack of infrastructure hinder economic growth.
- ▶ **Exploitation of resources:** Informal mining and resource extraction benefit a few at the expense of many.

# Social Fragmentation

- ▶ **Community divisions:** Fragmentation occurs along ethnic, class, or neighborhood lines.
- ▶ **Power vacuums:** Local leaders vie for control, exacerbating instability.
- ▶ **Loss of collective action:** Residents feel abandoned and lose hope in collective progress.
- ▶ **Disillusionment:** Promises of peace and prosperity remain unfulfilled, deepening despair.

# Failure of External Aid

- ▶ **Temporary relief:** NGOs provide short-term assistance but leave unfinished projects behind.
- ▶ **Corruption in aid efforts:** Bribes and inefficiency undermine development initiatives.
- ▶ **Residents left behind:** International organizations abandon communities after initial efforts fail.
- ▶ **Mismanagement of funds:** Resources are squandered, leaving critical needs unmet.

# Migration and Displacement

- ▶ **Mass exodus:** Residents flee to rural areas or foreign countries seeking safety.
- ▶ **Squatting in public spaces:** Desperation drives people to occupy parks, churches, and other communal areas.
- ▶ **Loss of population:** Many residents leave Canaan, further weakening its social fabric.
- ▶ **Hopelessness:** The lack of security and opportunities forces families to abandon their homes.

# Collapse of Justice System

- ▶ **Judiciary under attack:** Judges, lawyers, and clerks face threats, kidnappings, and killings.
- ▶ **Impunity reigns:** Criminals act without fear of punishment, eroding trust in institutions.
- ▶ **Failed investigations:** Corruption cases go unresolved as officials flee or are assassinated.
- ▶ **Breakdown of rule of law:** Legal mechanisms cease to function, leaving residents vulnerable.



# Lack of Basic Infrastructure

- ▶ **No paved roads or electricity:** Residents rely on informal methods to meet basic needs.
- ▶ **No public services:** Absence of bus stations, parks, schools, or healthcare facilities.
- ▶ **Informal land claims:** Residents claim plots of land without legal titles, leading to disputes.
- ▶ **Deterioration of public infrastructure:** No one is responsible for maintenance or development.

# Call to Action

- ▶ **Collaborative solutions:** All stakeholders must work together to rebuild governance.
- ▶ **Elections and representation:** Establishing trustworthy electoral systems is crucial for democratic progress. EVMs need to be banned, and electoral integrity needs to be protected
- ▶ **Security and infrastructure:** Addressing crime and building essential services can restore stability.
- ▶ **International support:** Sustainable aid and intervention are needed to address systemic issues.